M[illegible]RWOOD ON STRIKE by Edward Newhouse

NEW MASSES

MAY 18, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

WILLIAM GREEN

by BRUCE MINTON and JOHN STUART

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

IT IS an appalling idea, but we saw our first robin of the season only this week. And we wouldn't have seen our first robin even yet if it hadn't been for the fact that we had an out-of-town assignment. We can remember the day when by this time of year our dawn patrol under the alders along the creek would be revealing fifty or sixty varieties of birds of a morning. Those were the days when the most exciting form of red we knew was the flash of the scarlet tanager. And those, of course, were the days before the October revolution and the coming to power of fascism in Italy and Germany.

Those events have changed the world, and the ways of men in the world. Hence the grim fact that May was half gone before we saw our first robin, and then only by grace of a job that had to be done. The day will come, of course, when civilized men can once again find time to go peering through the morning mists watching for the black mask of the Maryland Yellowthroat and listening for the bold whistle of the Rose-Breasted Grosbeak. But before then, there is work to be done.

And you will agree with us, we think, that one of the important jobs is the continuous growth of the NEW MASSES, the extension of the influence of this magazine until it plays a leading role in American political and cultural life. We are hammering away toward that end, and we need your help—always, but especially now. We have told you why we are campaigning for a $15,000 fund: to make steady improvements in the magazine (which cost money) until its steady improvement attracts enough more readers to balance our budget and allow us to continue the improvements on a permanent pay-as-you-go basis.

And you have been responding to our fund-raising efforts in the loyal way we expected. For after all, it is *your* magazine, not ours. Readers everywhere have been staging parties for our benefit, and sending in their $100 lifetime and $25 ten-year subscriptions. Since we published our thermometer two weeks ago showing the standing of the campaign, another $1400 has come in, so that we now stand at $3864. Trotsky's absurd charge that we are financed by Moscow gold has also had its effect; listen to this letter:

"To the NEW MASSES:

"Mr. Trotsky tells the world that the NEW MASSES is supported by Moscow gold; Mr. Forsythe makes out a case that the magazine has been struggling along (financially) on American pennies. To meet both claims I am enclosing the check which is (perhaps for the first time) Moscow gold for the NEW MASSES. The check constitutes the interest (seven percent) on Soviet gold bonds which Mr. Stalin is paying me regularly and faithfully. It is the interest on honestly earned American dollars which I submit for what I believe to be a just cause."

We've been getting a lot of fan mail recently telling us how good we are, but the mail has not been heavy enough in coin of the realm to guarantee that we can continue to improve indefinitely. (And summer is icumen in!) We want to be able to do so (and you want that, too), and so we are asking you to:

(1) Let us know if you're running a party or other affair for our benefit. It's easy; write us about it.

(2) Publicize the fact that we're offering $100 lifetime subscriptions and $25 ten-year subscriptions. (And buy one yourself!)

(3) Send us the names of people you think would be interested in one of these long-term subscriptions.

(4) Don't hesitate to send in a check to our fund, even if your party for the NEW MASSES hasn't been arranged yet.

(5) Don't harbor a guilty conscience; do it *now!*

What's What

BRUCE MINTON and John Stuart were the authors of "The Story of John L. Lewis" which ran in the NEW MASSES some weeks ago. The present series on William Green, which will appear in three installments, is (like the Lewis biography) an abridgment. The authors' full-length portraits of both Green and Lewis, along with other labor leaders, will be published shortly in a volume by Modern Age Books, Inc. This volume will be a history of the American labor movement seen through the lives of outstanding trade-union leaders. . . . Edward Newhouse, now in California, is well known to NEW MASSES readers for his short stories and other contributions. His most recent novel, *This Is Your Day,* excited considerable favorable comment. . . . George Seldes is perhaps best known for his authentic and vivid war correspondence and for the subsequent volumes he wrote about his experiences in line of duty—another book he wrote also touched on a different phase of his experiences as a working newspaperman. This was called *The Freedom of the Press,* and exposed the voluntary censorship of news by American newspaper publishers. Mr. Seldes's last contribution to the NEW MASSES was his article on the influence of the left-wing press in our twenty-fifth anniversary number, Dec. 15, 1936. . . . Granville Hicks was formerly literary editor of the NEW MASSES. His comment on books of the month, which is published for the first time in this issue, will appear regularly hereafter. . . . The painting by Luis Arenal reproduced on page 25 is included in an exhibition of his lacquers and gouaches at the Delphic Studios in New York. The American Friends of the Mexican people are sponsoring the exhibit.

Who's Who

HERE'S one for the book, those of you who are lucky enough to be within easy traveling distance of New York's Carnegie Hall. Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist

Party of the United States, will make his first public speech on the Supreme Court issue there the night of May 26 under the auspices of the NEW MASSES. Among other things, Browder will reply to the assertion of Senator Royal S. Copeland that President Roosevelt borrowed from the Communists his plan for reforming the Supreme Court. This will not only be the first time Comrade Browder has taken the platform on this question, but the first time any Communist leader has done so. And the issue is one of the great political questions of our day. Don't miss it! The ad on page 28 will tell you more about it.

With the Pulitzer prizes out of the way, the track would seem clear for some significant literary awards. And at this juncture the League of American Writers announces that at the Congress of American Writers, which convenes in New York June 4, 5, and 6, a series of prizes will be awarded to one outstanding work in each of the following fields: fiction, drama, poetry, criticism, biography, and miscellaneous. The League, whose offices are at 125 E. 24th St., N. Y., is canvassing its members for nominations for the awards.

Flashbacks

AS all the king's horses and all the king's men stage a coronation again, a few winking Britishers note a curious thing. George ("Cal Coolidge") Windsor, for whom the ancestral hat has recently been cut down to size, calls attention, by donning it this week, to England's anniversary of kinglessness. Parliament passed an act May 19, 1649, declaring "the people of England . . . are hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed to be a Commonwealth." . . . The great German Peasants' Revolt ended May 15, 1525, with the capture of its leader, Thomas Muenzer, "a real democrat," according to Engels, "who fought for real demands, not illusions." . . . On May 14, 1771, began a life devoted to fighting "a Trinity of monstrous evils—Private or Individual Property, Absurd and Irrational Systems of Religion, and Marriage founded on Individual Property and some of these Irrational Systems of Religion." The man: Robert Owen. His cause: utopian socialism. . . . Denmark prohibited all slave trade, May 16, 1792, the first country to take such a step. . . . Despite the official silence of *Who's Who* on the subject, it has been ascertained that Earl Browder was born May 20, 1891, in Wichita, Kan.

THIS WEEK

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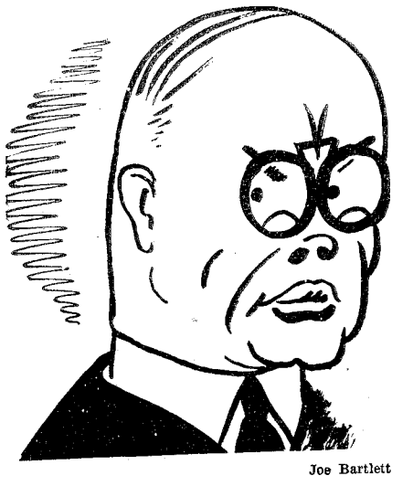

Joe Bartlett

William Green of Coshocton, O.

Miner son of a miner father, the head man of the A. F. of L. early trimmed his sails to follow Gompers's collaborationism

By Bruce Minton and John Stuart

THIRTY-SEVEN years as president of the American Federation of Labor had convinced Samuel Gompers that the federation was pretty much his property. And so, being both canny and methodical, the old man prepared for his long-threatened death by grooming a successor. He died in December 1924, leaving specific instructions that "Crown Prince" Matthew Woll of the small photo-engravers' union should inherit his position at the head of the council table.

Gompers, however, was not able to dictate from the grave. The executive council appropriately mourned his passing, and each vice-president quietly set about assuring himself a major role in the direction of federation affairs. On one point, the strong men on the executive council saw eye to eye: they had grown heartily sick of Gompers's autocracy. To show their defiance, they would straightway disregard Gompers's choice for president.

Particularly did John L. Lewis, dynamic president of the United Mine Workers, largest union in the federation, resent Woll's pretensions. For Lewis never forgot an enemy; he recalled very clearly Woll's opposition back in 1921 when Lewis, with what amounted to sacrilege, had run against Gompers for president. Now, if the contradictory politics of the executive council precluded his own election, Lewis at least wanted to have a controlling voice in the final choice. William Hutcheson of the carpenters and T. A. Rickert, of the United Garment Workers, both dominant figures in the federation, felt much the same way. Among them, they eliminated Woll and even scrapped Gompers's further decree that the first vice-president, senile James Duncan of the Granite Cutters, be honored as the stop-gap until the next annual convention could endorse a more permanent choice. The honor, Gompers had felt, was due Duncan because of his countless years as vice-president and his seniority. But the men who maneuvered the executive council feared that during Duncan's short term, Matthew Woll might plot some course whereby he could edge himself into the presidency at the convention. Accordingly, six days after Gompers's death, the council "unanimously" named a dark horse, William Green of Coshocton, O.

The compromise candidate had nothing markedly to recommend him, except membership in Lewis's union—and Lewis controlled the largest bloc of votes. Yet each official on the executive council hoped to advance his own interests through the prosaic, malleable Green. To the accompaniment of Duncan's tearful protests, they draped the portly secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers in Gompers's mantle, and presented him to the American labor movement. The membership was fully as astounded as Green. With the exception of the miners, the rank and file had hardly heard of William Green before.

Yet even after they had planted Green in Gompers's shoes, the A.F. of L. high command retained doubts as to his fitness. Almost inadvertently, Green had gained the reputation of being a progressive through his sponsorship in the Ohio state Senate of legislation beneficial to the miners. His Red-baiting (all council officials were accomplished performers) lacked the required vociferousness. No doubt Green's opposition to American recognition of the Soviet Union was wholehearted. Yet how explain his support at the 1920 Montreal convention of the progressive Plumb Plan which sought to grant semi-governmental ownership of the railroads? Did not Green's advocacy of old-age pensions smack of socialism? The leadership hesitated, not quite convinced that they had found the appropriate pawn in the quiet but untested Green.

The convention that would confirm William Green's appointment or name another president met at Atlantic City late in 1925 with Green nervously presiding. As the session got under way with the customary routine speeches, Green recognized the fraternal delegate, A. A. Purcell, president of the British Trade Union Congress. Instead of the formal emptiness expected of him, Purcell, a member of the Anglo-Russian Committee and a recent visitor to the Soviet Union, challenged the very principles on which the A.F. of L. rested. The astonished officials squirmed as they heard him urge militant industrial unionism, a labor party, recognition by the United States of the Soviet Union, and friendly relations between the Russian unions and the A.F. of L.

A tense moment. Amid mild applause, Purcell resumed his seat. William Green, the unproved, temporary president, stepped to the rostrum. The old-timers leaned forward, wondering how the sleek, round-faced chairman would meet the challenge. At fifty-two, Green

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had the well-fed, comfortable appearance of a small-town banker. His pince-nez gave him dignity; the heavy gold watch-chain gleaming across his paunch added the proper air of solidity. And as he spoke, with easy, ambling affability, the members of the executive council nodded to each other and smiled.

"There may be a time," Green admitted, shaking his finger at the delegates, "when we in America can organize an independent political party, when our nation becomes an industrial nation, as Great Britain now is. We will have to change in America from an agricultural nation to a semi-industrial country before we can make a success along that line." Nowhere did William Green give ground to the fraternal delegate from England. Surely, he wore Gompers's mantle well. In the recess that followed, John P. Frey, pedant of the A.F. of L., was overheard telling his colleagues as they slowly paced the boardwalk: "Now we know that we have a strong man who can wear Samuel Gompers's shoes!"

The "strong man," with the convention's endorsement, could pretty well bank on being reëlected in the future as a matter of course. He had come out of the Middle West; the steady rise of a coal miner's son to the presidency of the A.F. of L. had left few scars. If he no longer looked much like a worker, who then on the executive council did? Mild, genial, well-mannered, he lacked the color of his garrulous, rabelaisian, exhibitionistic predecessor, just as he lacked his shrewdness. But superficial differences did not prevent Green from sharing the presidential chair with the ghost of Gompers.

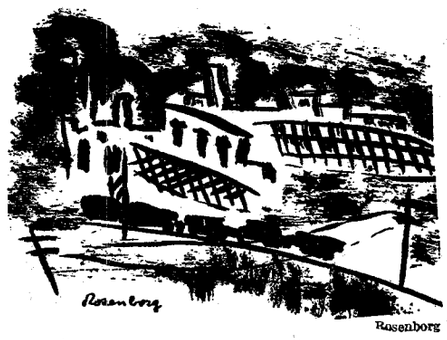
HUGH GREEN had left an English mine to settle with his Welsh wife in Coshocton, O. There William was born on March 3, 1873. The boy grew up in this little mining community, attended elementary school, and, during vacations, helped his father in the pit. The burden of a large family did not allow Hugh Green seriously to encourage young William's vague ambition to enter the ministry. Instead, at sixteen, William took his place in the mines.

In this expanding industrial town, the United Mine Workers of America, including many militant and class-conscious workers, not only fought to protect the miners from exploitation, but also formed the nucleus of the workers' social life. American miners had a proud heritage of struggle: more strikes, more aggressive tactics against the employers, than workers in any other occupation. Billy Green met socialists, anarchists, revolutionaries of all hues. But he had a cautious streak that caused him to shy away from strange ideas. He preferred teaching Sunday school in the local Baptist church to wrangling about the class struggle and ways to change the world. The serious-minded young man who didn't smoke or chew or even swear, shrugged away the "subversive" opinions he heard all about him in the union, and concentrated on getting a firm grasp on the workings of inner-union politics.

At twenty-one, William married. He worked in the mines, but quite naturally he dreamed of success, the American kind of success that brought comfort and prestige. In 1900, he landed his first job as a union official when he was elected sub-district president of the U.M.W. His days in the mines were over. From then on, it was a matter of waiting for the breaks in order to push higher in the union. And in 1906 he stepped into the presidency of the Ohio state district of the union, where he remained for four years. To bolster his position, he dabbled in Ohio politics. A loyal Democrat, he acted as delegate-at-large to the 1912 convention, and the next year won a seat in the state Senate. In his two terms—four years—he soon established himself as "regular," a dependable administration man willing enough to take orders. It was Senator Green who made the sob speech for the administration at the end of important debates, a technique which he perfected and which proved invaluable throughout his career.

With hair combed neatly to one side, in plain, well-fitting clothes, apple-cheeked Senator Green cut a nice, and unobtrusive, figure as Democratic floor leader. He drafted occasional bills, carefully progressive in tone, not too extreme but calculated to add prestige to their sponsor. His measure eliminating certain abuses in the mining industry, his bill instituting a short work week for women, his compensation act, passed the legislature without great opposition. More important, he introduced legislation abolishing the payment of miners on the basis of their output after coal had been screened (a trick that allowed operators to disregard a large part of the miner's tonnage). Green's proposal substituted payment on "mine run"; in other words, on coal as it came out of the pit. The bill passed. Yet the credit was not entirely Green's; the miners struck in 1914 and their militant pressure aided considerably in forcing the bill's adoption.

During his second term, Green proved that he had not altered too greatly since his younger Coshocton days. Then he had meticulously shunned socialistic ideas. And now, with the Akron rubber workers striking for higher wages and against miserable working conditions, Green looked askance at the I.W.W. organizers who had come to Akron and turned confusion into effective action. As chairman of the legislative investigating committee, Green smelled "outside agitators." He denounced the I.W.W. leadership, condemning the autocracy of the rubber owners as an afterthought. His attack largely accounted for the strike's failure. The rubber workers made no gains and returned to work under even more oppressive conditions. Nevertheless, labor's representative in the state Senate had saved workers from "revolution."



State politics aided Green to obtain, in 1913, the office of secretary-treasurer of the U.M.W. He moved to Indianapolis and settled down to his new job, though he kept a soft place in his heart for Coshocton, which he revisited regularly. He was not one to drop old friends; as the town's most distinguished citizen, he took care to show that success had not turned his head. But his career had only just begun. Events soon again broke favorably for him. A vacancy in the A.F. of L. executive council in 1914 left the powerful U.M.W. unrepresented. Gompers offered the seventh vice-presidency, which carried with it membership in the council, to John P. White, head of the U.M.W. White, however, indignantly refused the position of *seventh* vice-president as beneath his level of importance. Gompers appointed another candidate, but the miners still remained without a council position. Finally, to solve this vexing problem, Gompers cast about for a compromise, and ended by selecting William Green for the eighth vice-presidency. Green had no false pride. Unknown outside his own union, he refused to let dignity stand in his way: he would eagerly have accepted the eightieth chair at the council table. Time, he realized, would eliminate the older members and with each death the line moved up one seat. By 1924, Green had risen to third place.

A sober, plodding man, not endowed with great imagination or overwhelming ambition, Green never seriously imagined himself president of the A.F. of L. But he found that with patience and by avoiding open conflict which too often brought enemies, he could get ahead. And just because he took no leading role in federation affairs, the unassuming Green—family man with a pleasant wife, four daughters, and a son; Elk, Odd Fellow, ardent dry—found himself without any effort on his part elected to the presidency of the federation at a salary of $12,000 a year with expenses, and looked upon as a force in the American scene.

"Labor is safe under his leadership," a Richmond paper pointed out, "capital has nothing to fear during his regime, and the public is fortunate in having him as the responsible spokesman of a highly important group of citizens." Throughout the country, anti-labor newspapers congratulated the A.F. of L. on its "sane choice." William Green read the editorials and resolved to live up to their high praise. With his election, he became America's most obliging—and probably most prolific—public speaker. He appeared everywhere, before Rotarians, Elks, Masons, Odd Fellows, American Legionnaires, church groups, Y's, and, now and then, before the workers. The refrain always had the same lilt, as though Green were still answering the hotheads who

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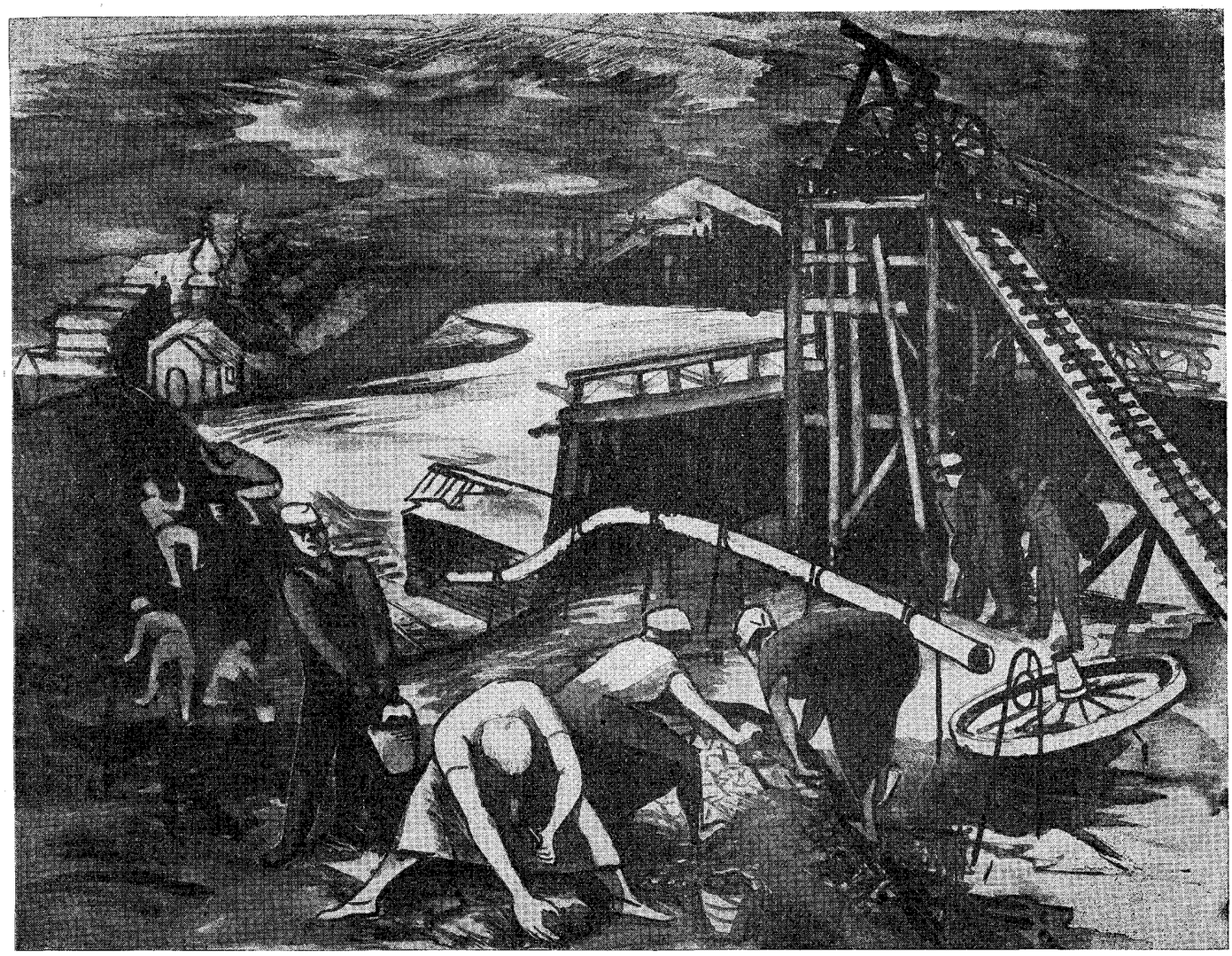

Coal Pickers

Lithograph by Harry Gottlieb

had talked so freely in those early Coshocton days: he promised to be a "good" labor leader, he pledged that he would inconvenience no one. The theory which held that class distinctions existed, Green declared to be a "foreign" doctrine without relevance to America. His leadership, he stressed immediately after his election, would reject the philosophy of class conflict and steadfastly "adhere to those fundamental principles so ably championed by Mr. Gompers, and upon which the superstructure of organized labor rests."

Nor did he intend these words merely as a tribute to the deceased Gompers. William Green had been trained in the Gompers tradition; it had become as deeply ingrained in him as the indelible blue spots under his skin which he carried as a result of his early days in the mines. He clung to his heritage because he believed in it, and because he understood nothing else. With the nation in a period of unprecedented financial gambling, Green foresaw only higher and higher and still higher profits, limitless growth of industry, and as a result more and more jobs. Wages would rise, too, of that he felt certain, for he was convinced that the just owners could easily be made to understand the "wisdom of labor's position" when it asked for a reasonable share of the profits.

In the subsequent years, from 1925 to 1929, as the membership of the unions dropped precipitously, as unemployment spread, as strikes and labor organizations were brutally crushed, as the workers' standard of living remained stationary while profits mounted and the stock market shot up out of sight, the disillusioned Green pulled Gompers's tattered mantle more closely about him and continued to grind out padded, patterned speeches proclaiming industrial peace and good will. Gompers, the great opportunist, had handed down the rule book; Green, content to be a figurehead, accepted it without question.

Any other man, even a strong man in the same position, would have responded to Green's conditioning in much the same manner. For though the dead Gompers had been unable to push his own candidate, Matthew Woll, into the presidency, he had saddled his philosophy securely on the executive council and on the rest of the A.F. of L. They accepted unquestioningly the premise of this philosophy: the denial of the existence of class antagonisms, from which stemmed a policy of complete collaboration with the employer and the rejection of political action. Not only did the A.F. of L. officialdom depend on across-the-table diplomacy with the employers, but it excluded the majority of workers from the federation. Jurisdictional squabbles replaced struggle. Failure to reflect fundamental changes in industry resulting from the introduction of mass-production methods, mechanization, centralization, lack of unity and objective, placed the A.F. of L. executive council in the position of defending itself against the tanks, airplanes, and machine guns of the employers with a rusty blunderbuss which the council members had sworn not to fire.

William Green had no desire to quarrel with the executive council: he wanted only to carry out their wishes. His willingness to follow, his faculty for strict neutrality, allowed the stronger heads of international and national unions to function without restraint. Under Green, the A.F. of L. drifted aimlessly like a rudderless boat, and the official labor movement tapered off into a dues-paying club without purpose or drive or even a semblance of accomplishment.

(*This is the first of a series of three articles on William Green. The second will appear next week.*)

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Hollywood on Strike

The picket lines of the technicians signify not only bad conditions, but are revealing on the craft-union question

By Edward Newhouse

HOLLYWOOD.—"I have a lot of reasons for being here," said one of the sound technicians on the picket line in front of the Warner Bros. studio at Burbank. "Listen carefully and I'll explain some of them. Last night my girl gets a call to report at the Hal Roach studios for work in an evening gown. She's an extra. So she meets a bunch of the girls and they're piled into a bus. There some of the other girls tell her they're really going to a party out at the Hal Roach ranch, two hundred and fifty of them at $7.50 apiece. The M.G.M. convention was in town and the boys were going to have themselves a stag. So they get out there and the party's in full swing.

"Plenty of champagne and music and Mexican entertainers. Plenty of Scotch and rough stuff. Now most of those girls are over twenty-one, and somebody who doesn't know the set-up here would think they knew better. But they're picture girls and they know what it means not to answer a call, even if it doesn't come through Central Casting. So there's girls all over the place, girls drunk and girls crying, fighting off guys or going off into rooms, and pretty soon my girl gets sick of it and phones me to pick her up. So I go out there and force my way in, and a more disgraceful scene I never hope to see. People sprawled all over, clutching bottles. I couldn't begin to tell you about the place. They must have blown in all of $20,000 on that party, and all the big shots there, Hal Roach and Joe Cohen and the rest. So on my way out I hit a guy who said something dirty about the strike. My girl kept crying all the way home.

"If only to fight people like that, I'd be out here. But there's other reasons. Three years ago I was making $150 a week along with the rest of the skilled sound technicians. Along comes a jurisdictional dispute between the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, and we get the old tossing around, and after the razzle-dazzle is over we're making $40 a week and working unlimited hours. I'm not picketing here because somebody told me to."

TO DATE, craft unionism has hamstrung every attempt to organize America's fourth largest industry. Five international unions—the musicians, teamsters, carpenters, electricians, and the I.A.T.S.E.—operate under basic agreement with producers, but they have fought among themselves and with unions which should have been their close allies.

The I.A.T.S.E. is the International Alliance for Theatrical and Stage Employees. Its initials are locally pronounced Yazi or Nazi. It's a mushroom grouping of craft-union locals, ostensibly on the industrial-union principle, but run by the corrupt Brown mob with an abandon that would have done honor to Umbrella Mike in his palmiest days. They started as a paper organization, then agreed with the producers on a closed-shop pact which stampeded the workers into signing.

[The author refers to the group of I.A.T.S.E. leaders headed by George A. Brown, who was appointed in October 1936 a member of the Executive Committee of the A.F. of L. replacing David Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. At this time, the I.A.T.S.E. had 5500 members, which made it the biggest A.F. of L. union in the film industry. The present strike-breaking activities of the I.A.T.S.E. are not unprecedented in the history of this union. Some five years ago, it signed an agreement with the movie producers providing that first cameramen should not join the Yazis, but should remain in the American Society of Cinematographers for the duration of their five-year contract. This achieved two purposes for the producers: it divided the skilled technicians into two rival camps, and kept the first cameramen in what is to all intents and purposes a company union. The practical advantages of this arrangement for the producers, as well as the effect of George A. Brown's policies, became abundantly clear in 1933. The sound men, organized in the I.A.T.S.E., went on strike, and the first cameramen, organized in the Society of Cinematographers, were used to break that strike.—The Editors.]

There hasn't been a membership meeting since. Then out of a clear sky, Brown slaps a two-percent payroll assessment on all members over and above the regular dues, death assessments, etc. The other day one of a group of reporters asked an official what the Yazis did with this money, the men would like to know. And the officials said, "What's the difference, what good would it be for them to know?" Nobody was shocked when the local papers ran this.

The Yazis could no more be expected to lead a fight against prevailing conditions than Hutcheson of the carpenters or Tobin of the teamsters, both of whom are backing William Green's attempt to break the current strike. The plight of the extras has been described often enough, but conditions among other studio workers are almost as bad. Whether you're a plumber, scenic artist, molder, or costumer, you're on tap twenty-four hours a day and you better hug the telephone or someone else will get the call. You can be snatched to work on location for a couple of hours, then not see a paycheck for weeks. And Harry Cohen won't underwrite your telephone bills, either.

Matters came to a head when the Brown gang made an attempt to chisel the painters' union away from the Painters' International, no less. The movement for genuine industrial unionism got irrevocably under way in the studios, and the new Federated Motion Picture Crafts was formed. The call for the present strike was issued on May Day by Charles Lessing, and it pulled eleven unions out of the ten major studios. Production is still under way, since the need for the type of work performed by these 6000 strikers will not assert itself decisively for a while. Picket lines have to patrol an unnaturally large number of entrances and areas. But they're solid and clicking.

Naturally, Tobin, chieftain of the carpenters' union, and William Green, A.F. of L. president, and the I.A.T.S.E. swung into action. Green wired to say he thought the strike was "unfortunate." The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers office sent a telegram instructing the Hollywood officials of their union immediately to expel any member who refuses to walk through the picket lines. A similar telegram came from the office of the teamsters' union. Then other telegrams came through dozens of local organizations, a donation to the strikers from the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild, $500 from the Screen Actors' Guild, support from Harry Bridges of the I.L.A. Then came assurance of full support from John Brophy of the C.I.O., and that brought down the house in a five-minute ovation at the strikers' mass meeting.

WITHOUT EXCEPTION, eighteen pickets I chose at random expressed themselves in favor of joining up with the C.I.O. And the Federated Motion Picture Crafts must do this *if it is to survive.*

Even Charles Lessing, who told me he favored industrial unionism in principle but thought the C.I.O. premature, has since stated, cautiously enough, that he would "accept aid from those who offered it." Certainly he did not mean the executive board of the Los Angeles Central Trades Council, whose head, J. W. Buzzell, rushed into the fray with a preposterous offer for settlement immediately accepted by the producers. Buzzell proposed (1) that the workers go back on the job and

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(2) that they negotiate demands afterward.

Not even the NEW MASSES can undertake to print the precise wording of Lessing's answer. As far as the newspapers were concerned, the Federation's reply placed the workers in the position of refusing to arbitrate. But an acceptance of Buzzell's proposals would have been worse than the Yazis' current tactic of giving free union cards to strikebreakers.

At this point, it must be said that the rank-and-file movement for democratic control in the I.A.T.S.E. is daily growing, and has already crystallized around the "white rats" group, inappropriately so designated.

At this writing, a great deal but not everything, as has been supposed, depends on the conduct of the Screen Actors' Guild. Individual actors and actresses, such as Elissa Landi, Luise Rainer, Gale Sondergaard, and Lionel Stander have already come out publicly in support of the film strikers, and the gift of $500 to the strike fund was official.

By the time this appears, more decisive action will have been taken on the hitherto equivocal position of the Guild. That this position has been hesitant and temporizing in the important first days of the strike can only be explained on the basis of the Guild's varied composition and curious constitution. Here is the only incorporated labor union in America. Its membership is divided into junior and senior groups, i. e., those who make less or more than $250 a week. The junior group is militant but virtually disfranchised. Any of their proposals or resolutions, unanimous though they might be, can be vetoed by the seniors. Just like that. Since its formation, the Guild's executive board, composed largely of conservatives, has chosen to maneuver with the A.F. of L. leaders who could have forced recognition of the Guild by the producers with a single strike.

The lesson of the longshoremen who refused to work with non-Guild actors seems to have been lost on the Guild's board. It hastened to enter into relations with the reactionary Buzzell machine in the Central Trades Council, but failed in its clear duty to join the Federated Motion Picture Crafts on the day of its formation.

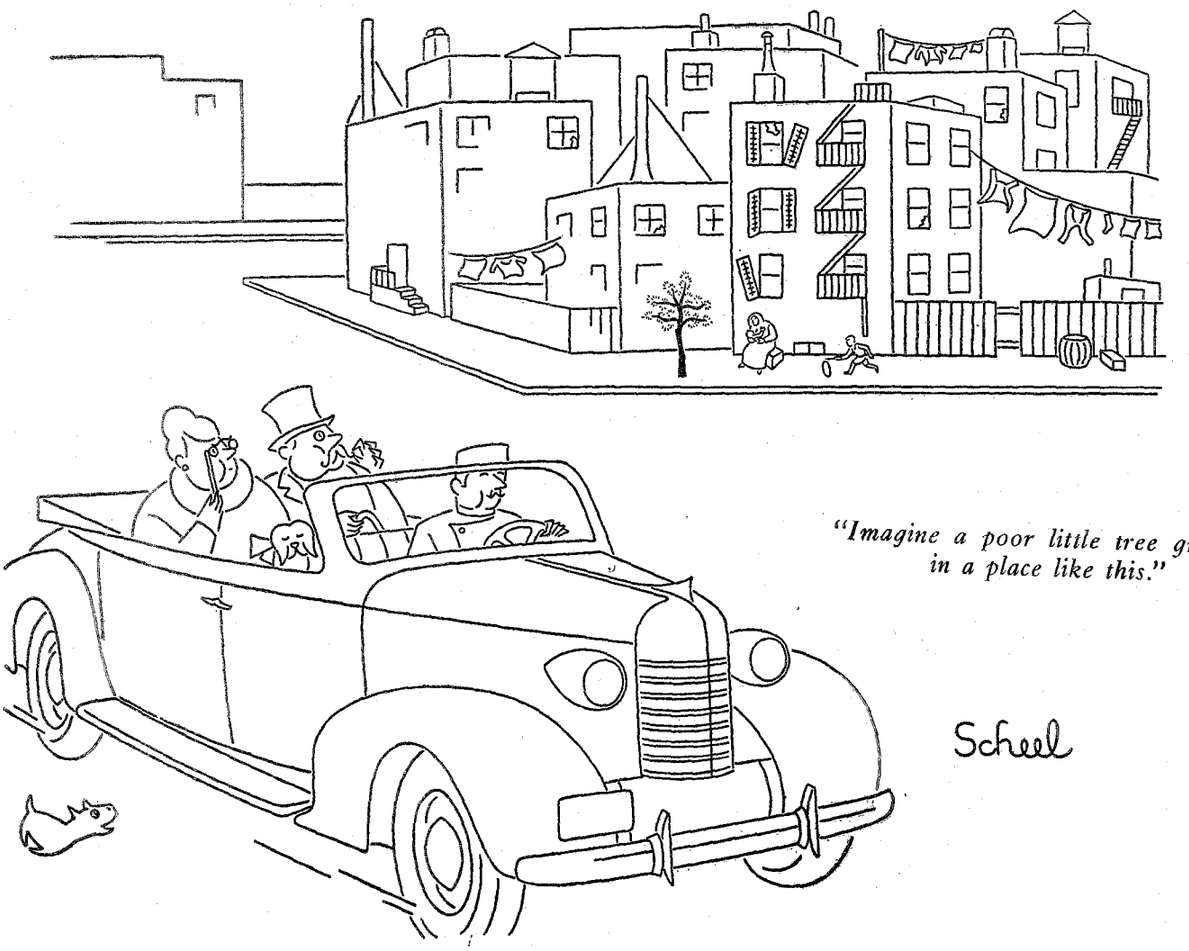
Unfortunately, this is being written before the annual membership meeting of the Guild, where participation in the strike will finally be considered. Right now, however, it is clear that sentiment for such participation is strong even among the seniors. In response to his splendid speech at a special Guild meeting, Lionel Stander has received a telegram that is more than equivalent to the year's Academy award: "May the undersigned organizations express their deep appreciation for your unsurpassable stand in their behalf at the meeting of the Guild. Trade unionists will never forget you nor forsake you. Motion Picture Painters, Make-Up Artists, Scenic Artists, Utility Workers, Stationary Engineers, Machinists, Cooks and Waiters, Plumbers, Molders, Boiler Makers and Welders, Costumers, Federated Motion Picture Crafts."

Clearly it is up to every union man and friend of organized labor to boycott all productions of the ten struck studios, M.G.M., Paramount, Warner's, and the rest, until satisfactory settlement has been made. The loss in revenue caused by every union man's decision to miss but a single show would make Messrs. Casey, Schenck, and Mannix much friendlier at the green table.

[At its annual meeting on Sunday, the Screen Actors' Guild disassociated itself from the strike in order to obtain a closed shop for itself. In doing so, it lined up with the I.A.T.S.E., whose representative spoke from the platform. This action has compelled thousands of rank and filers, sympathetic to the strike, to walk through the established picket lines. Progressives are hoping that the Screen Actors' Guild, having won a closed shop for itself, will now help the strikers win one, too.—THE EDITORS.]

Meantime, Harry Bridges's longshoremen are picketing Grauman's Chinese Theatre; American Student Union members take regular turns in the lines around the studios; and local motion picture houses are reporting a drop in business as high as 60 percent.

Win or lose, this is a strike for industrial unionism, and that's one thing out of which Sam Goldwyn can't buy his way. It's all over Los Angeles now, and in his own words, "It's colossal, but it'll improve."



"Imagine a poor little tree growing in a place like this."

Theodore Scheel

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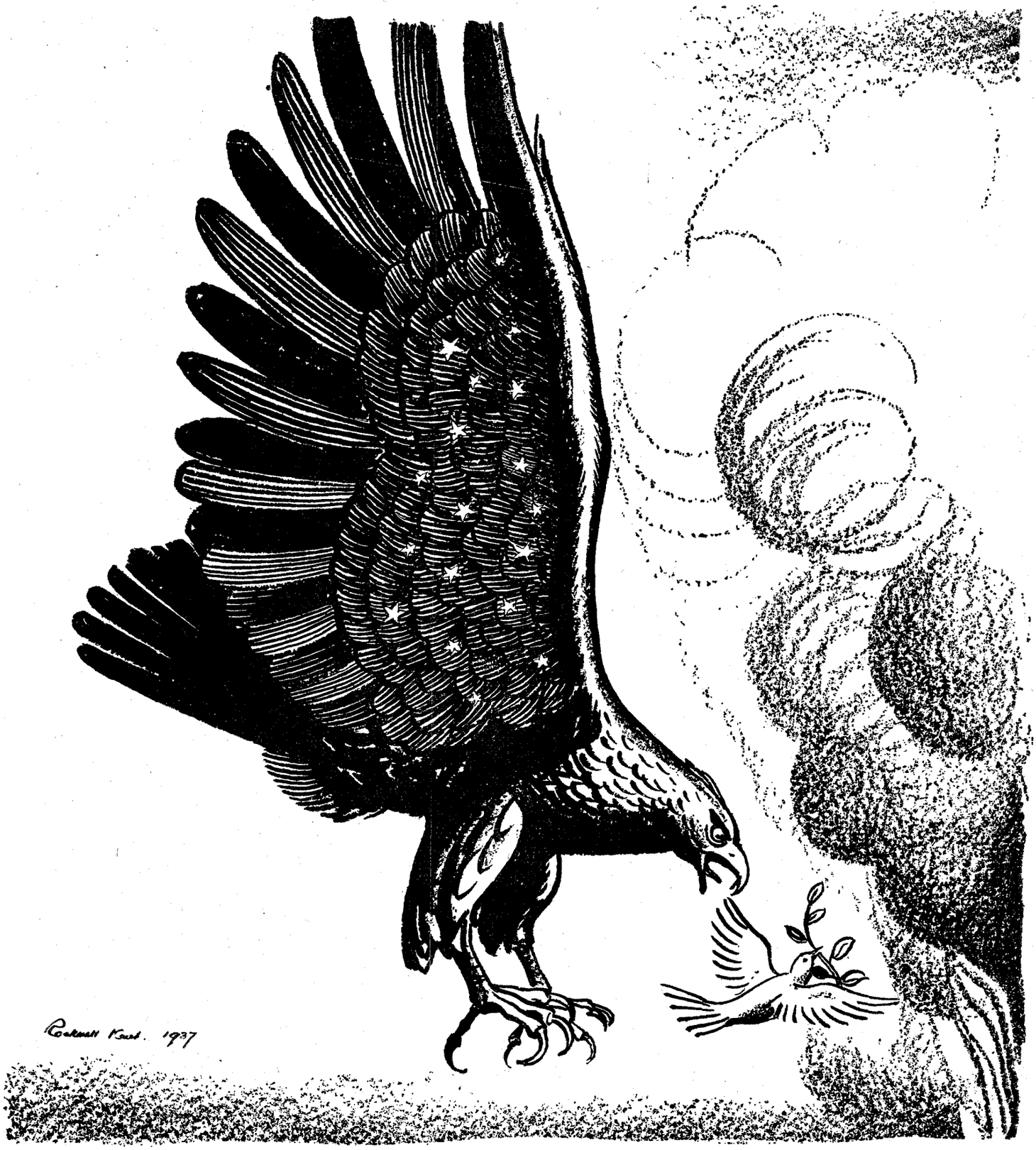

Rockwell Kent

THE "AMERICAN" PEACE POLICY

Washington, D. C.—Senator Gerald P. Nye (Dem., N. D.) today attacked the form of the Neutrality measure, pointing out that unless an embargo were imposed on shipments of arms and raw materials for armaments to Germany and Italy, our so-called neutrality amounted in substance to the cutting off from the Spanish loyalists of their means of self-defense, at the same time that it provided the means for Italy and Germany to continue their "war of invasion."—NEWS ITEM.

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Barcelona and Bilbao

BETWEEN them, the week's crises in the Basque country and in Catalonia express the complexity of the struggle to maintain democracy in Spain. In Bilbao, the threat is primarily from the enemy without. In Barcelona, the threat was primarily from disunity within. The solution of both problems has already been reached in Madrid, where this two-fold danger was acute at an earlier stage. It remains to be seen whether Bilbao and Barcelona will duplicate the feat of Madrid on both accounts.

The situation in Catalonia loomed ominously for many months, owing to the lack of activity on the Aragon front. Many Anarchists refused to accept a single command, war discipline, submergence of all differences for the duration of the war. The best and most of the Anarchists have gladly embraced these people's-front objectives. The present difficulty was precipitated by the fact that the Trotskyists sought to take advantage of this differentiation within the ranks of the Anarchists to stage a putsch whereby power would be theirs. Their intrigues were made easier by the fact that the Anarchist movement is a strange conglomeration of idealists, gangster elements known as "uncontrollables," and job-holding labor bureaucrats of the Syndicalist unions. The Trotskyists found allies for their plot among the "uncontrollables," but the best representatives of the Anarchist movement, such as Garcia Oliver, called for a speedy end to the putsch.

It now appears that the attempt at a coup, inspired by the Trotskyists in an unholy alliance with the "uncontrollables" and "fifth column" fascists, has been routed, that a firm control is exercised by the government. The Trotskyist paper, *La Batalla,* will no longer call for "war in the rear" while the fascists attack at the front. Such a showdown was inevitable, and its aftermath may bring that unity which Catalonia has hitherto lacked.

As we go to press, the insurgents appear to have made further progress towards Bilbao though the city itself is not yet under siege. If Bilbao will hold fast against the fascist assault just as Catalonia has trounced the Trotskyist allies of fascism, Madrid may well be proud of the example she has set.

"Fifth Column" in America

WHAT is Congress going to do about disclosures made this week that General Franco's fascists maintain an espionage center in New York which is plotting against the recognized Spanish republic?

These disclosures, made first by the *Daily Worker,* are thoroughly documented by photostats of incriminating letters. They show that Franco's spies infest American ports, operating with diplomatic passports which have no diplomatic standing. Through agents in Mexico, Franco's agents are following shipping from the North American continent. Furthermore, they are conspiring, in violation of American law, to purchase Americans arms and munitions for a fascist "government" in Spain having no official standing with the government of the United States. They are engaged in a criminal plot to conduct military-naval operations against shipping in American waters bound for the Loyalist ports, against which there is no American blockade.

There is a startling similarity between this exposé and another recently made in Great Britain by the British *Daily Worker.* The leader of the American ring of spies is Juan Francisco de Cárdenas, former Spanish ambassador to the United States. His activities are linked to Ogden Hammond, former American ambassador to Spain. The leader of the British agents is the Marquis del Moral, a Spanish monarchist, whose British contact man is Lord Howard of Penrith, former British ambassador to Spain.

Senator Gerald P. Nye has announced that he will introduce a resolution in the Senate calling for a thorough investigation into the activity of Franco agents in the United States. Congressman John T. Bernard has asked for a similar inquiry in the House of Representatives. Under international law, friendly powers cannot permit on their territory subversive conspiracies against each other's recognized governments. Congress owes it to the American people to initiate an investigation which will halt the illegal and criminal activities of Franco's agents in this country.

Either/Or

MONDAY'S primary in Minneapolis was of extraordinary significance for the whole farmer-labor-party movement. The highlight of the campaign was the vigorous drive by the Farmer-Labor Party to oust the present incumbent, Thomas E. Latimer, and nominate its own candidate, Kenneth Haycraft, Minnesota's old-age pension director. Latimer owed his previous election to farmer-labor backing, but his odious role during recent strikes brought his career in the party to an end.

Enter the Trotskyists. Now operating in the name of the Socialist Party, they threw their support to Latimer simply because that appeared the easiest way to knife the farmer-labor party, the Trotskyist *bête noir* in America. Under the leadership of Vincent R. Dunne, they organized a rump convention in opposition to the regular Farmer-Labor convention and nominated Latimer as their candidate.

This bit of strategy put the Trotskyists very much on the defensive at the recent Socialist Party convention. Although the convention itself passed a white-washing resolution on the Latimer endorsement, discretion dictated that it was time to shake Latimer. There has not been a Socialist candidate for mayor of Minneapolis in twenty years, but Dunne subsequently announced his candidacy for the office.

The strategy of the Minneapolis Trotskyists thus followed a classic pattern. *Either* support reactionaries against progressives—Latimer against Haycraft. *Or* split the progressive vote in favor of the reactionaries. Dunne campaigns for working-class votes against Haycraft so that Latimer is again the ultimate beneficiary.

The Brazilian Dimitrov

THE Brazilian government has finally dared to sentence Luis Carlos Prestes and Arthur Ewert, together with more than thirty others, for the "crime" of challenging the rule of force under dictator Getulio Vargas. The sentence of sixteen years' imprison-

A. Ajay

Franco—Invades America

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ment for Prestes, fourteen for Ewert, and lesser sentences for some of the others fits in well with the whole procedure of the trial. Prestes was deprived of the right to be defended by the only counsel in whom he had confidence, the Philadelphia lawyer, David Levinson. The presiding justice at the military tribunal which sentenced Prestes actually declared that proof was not needed for a conviction because the judges would decide according to their own opinions.

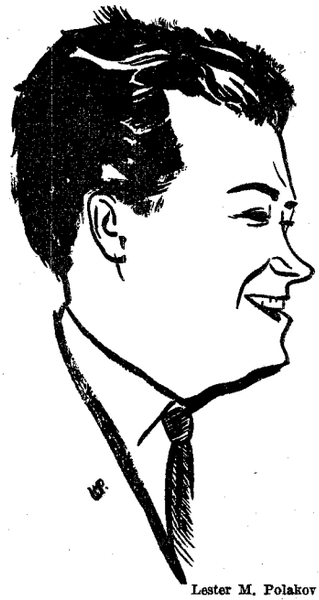
The proceedings at the trial were secret except for the first and last sessions. A report of the opening session in early March appeared in the Rio de Janeiro daily, *Correio da Manja.* According to this account, when the presiding judge invited Prestes to choose a defense counsel, Prestes replied: "I know nothing about what is going on here. For a year I have been in prison, deprived of all communication with the outside world in an atmosphere of police terrorism. Before I choose defense counsel, I want to know the charges against me." It is not stated whether Prestes knew that Levinson had not been permitted to defend him, but Prestes did denounce the court for arresting his previous counsel, Senator Abel Chermont, despite parliamentary immunity, when the latter agreed to represent him.

The indomitable heroism of Brazil's "Knight of Hope" is dramatically shown by a photo in the same paper. Prestes is on the way to court; one of his jailers is armed with a machine gun. Americans can do much to free Prestes by not permitting Vargas, who has announced an early visit to these shores, to forget Prestes when he arrives here. At this very moment, Vargas rules by martial law with the backing of the fascist Integralistas. The Brazilian constitution is a thing of the past. Wiring protests to the Brazilian ambassador, the U.S. Department of State, and to the Brazilian government in Rio de Janeiro is an immediate necessity.

243,000 Strong

THE convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union is still in session as we go to press, but the major issue, overshadowing all others, is clearly the policy with respect to the C.I.O. Nobody is under any illusion that the delegates will fail to endorse and maintain the I.L.G.W.U.'s membership in the C.I.O. Speculation turns on the form and method of that endorsement.

In his presidential report, David Dubinsky declared himself for continuance of the C.I.O. link, and most of the resolutions under consideration in committee emphatically support that stand. Other developments, however, make the situation somewhat ambiguous. For the first time since the formation of the I.L.G.W.U., William Green failed to make an address, but Matthew Woll, of all people, substituted for him. Woll delivered a less than forthright attack against the leader of the C.I.O., John L. Lewis, and placed the blame for the present division in the labor movement on the C.I.O. Dubinsky rose to the occasion and refuted him, but not before confusing damage had been done.



Lester M. Polakov

Dubinsky—Rebuked Woll

The situation became even more unclear when President Dubinsky himself put out "peace feelers" toward the executive council of the A. F. of L. Negotiations between the leaders of both sides seem contemplated, but no conditioning demand is made for reinstatement of the ten suspended international unions. Lewis had previously insisted upon this latter requirement if both sides were to negotiate as equals.

These developments made necessary a caucus by the progressive delegates at which Vice-President Julius Hochman demanded that the union "stand whole-heartedly and unequivocally with the C.I.O." He held that it was important to restore "peace" in the labor movement, but that a "peace at any price" policy would be fatal because it would throw the mass-production workers back to "the craft-union wolves."

More heartening than this seeming confusion were the militant declarations of continued support for the loyalists in Spain, backing of the American Labor Party, and opposition to fascism, here and abroad. The I.L.G.W.U. now has 95 percent of all garment workers in its ranks. Most inspiring of all was the great influx of youthful workers into its ranks since the last convention three years ago.

Sailors Aware

THE formation of a National Maritime Union on the Atlantic and Gulf ports is rooted in factors strikingly similar to those which made necessary the C.I.O. The international officials of the old International Seamen's Union, like the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., have obstructed unity and militancy among the seamen. They failed to organize the unorganized. They refused to recognize progressive officers democratically elected by the membership. Above all, they have barred the National Labor Relations Board from conducting fair elections to settle the conflicts within the union.

The new union, on the contrary, will consolidate and extend the gains already made by rank-and-file workers in this key industry. In existence less than a week, it has already won a strike against the powerful United Fruit Co. It will proceed to the logical objective of a National Maritime Federation which will include the seamen of both coasts. The N.L.R.B. will now be able to settle the inner-union situation by permitting the seamen themselves to choose between the I.S.U. and the National Maritime Union.

Waldo Frank Proposes

IN last week's *New Republic,* Waldo Frank urged still another commission to investigate the Moscow trials, this time one composed in large part by jurists and lawyers chosen by the Second and Third Internationals, or by the executive organs of the Socialist and Communist Parties of Great Britain and the United States. Several years ago, Mr. Frank signed a protest against the execution of Kirov's assassins. Later, realizing that such a protest implied condonation of murderers, he expressed regret. The first Moscow trial found him again ready to abandon the Soviet Union. But by January of this year, he had thought the matter over and admitted that the first trial was valid and the defendants guilty.

The second trial found Mr. Frank in Mexico, where he visited Trotsky for several hours. In his communication to the *New Republic,* Mr. Frank admits that he does not think the second trial was a frame-up, after careful study of the record, but he expresses great solicitude for "young liberals and radicals" who have been "demoralized" by the trials. Not for himself, but for others, he puts forth a proposal that is innocent of political awareness.

In the first place, the executive bodies of both the American and British Socialist Parties are so far apart in political complexion that an inquiry dependent upon them

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would be hopelessly compromised from the start. American Socialist leaders are busy flirting with Trotskyism. Labor Party leaders are busy flirting with Stanley Baldwin. Secondly, Mr. Frank's whole basis for an investigation is unsound. The "demoralization" which he ascribes to "young liberals and radicals" is a gratuitous invention, especially after the publication of the full court record, the disintegration of the American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky, and the fiasco in Mexico. The demoralization of the Trotsky clique must not be converted into the demoralization of liberal and radical youth.

Saddest of all, Mr. Frank actually declares that Trotsky has put the Soviet leaders on trial. This is fantasy. Mr. Frank has come back from the jungles of Coyoacan with a myth the effect of which, in his own words, "will be to confuse all minds; to make us less strong in clarity and realism during the crucial years before us."

Mr. Stolberg Disposes

THE crowning irony in respect to Waldo Frank's proposal is the contempt with which Trotsky's own "commission of inquiry" treated it at a meeting in Mecca Temple last Sunday night. Benjamin Stolberg, one of the master's voices, took some pains to ridicule Mr. Frank's efforts to become a "proletarian prophet," as he put it. Stolberg made it plain that Trotsky and his followers will accept no commission which they do not wholly control. He challenged Frank to embrace the existing "commission of inquiry" or shut up.

Trotsky's spokesmen at the meeting were even less kind to Carleton Beals, whom once they praised for his training, his "known integrity," and his "obvious non-partisanship." Miss Suzanne LaFollette indicated that it was dangerous for well-meaning persons to have correspondence with leaders of the Trotsky Committee when she publicly read a number of personal notes addressed by Beals to the committee. The burden of the notes was that Beals was hard up before he went to Coyoacan, though it was not clear why that was pertinent to the issue at hand.

The meeting did not reveal a single new document or fact not previously available, but it did include a number of impudent falsifications about the Communist press. Stolberg, for example, charged that "in the official Communist press, he [John Dewey] is called the fountain-head of darkness and Reaction." This is a bald lie. The Communist press has characterized Professor Dewey's role in the Trotsky Committee as in effect that of a liberal front for Trotskyist intrigue.

Hot Air and Hydrogen

IT IS altogether unlikely that any conclusive evidence will be uncovered by the official investigation of the Department of Commerce into the causes of the Hindenburg disaster. Most of the key officers aboard the dirigible perished. The explosion occurred so abruptly that the ground crew had to battle flames to the exclusion of any possible immediate investigation. As a result, we are likely to be treated to all manner of hypotheses for the next few weeks.

The hypotheses thus far offered are not without wider significance. The celerity with which Nazi officials hit upon sabotage as the cause is eloquent testimony of an official state of mind obsessed with the shadow of opposition to the regime. The more persuasive theory, which traces the catastrophe to the use of inflammable hydrogen, instead of the non-inflammable helium, also has social roots. The ideal of autarchy or a self-contained economy would prohibit the Nazis from importing helium. It has been incorrectly reported that the United States government has a monopoly on helium. The fact is that the Nazis could have bought helium in other lands at the cost of seventy dollars per 1000 cubic feet. The Nazis refused to pay the $50,000 increase in cost per passage which this would have entailed. Any thorough investigation will have to make clear the connection between technical factors and the social and economic basis of the Nazi regime.

Emergency Act

WAIT until the last minute. Shuffle and reshuffle a batch of reactionary bills, selecting their worst features. Then announce that an emergency exists because existing legislation on the subject is due to expire. The curtain comes down as Congress passes some emasculated measure with half an hour's debate. This legislative routine was followed in the case of the recent Neutrality Act. There are strong reasons for believing that it will be repeated with the budgetary allotment for work relief, now under consideration by the House Appropriations Committee.

The Workers' Alliance of America has determined that $3,000,000,000 is a rock-bottom minimum for adequate work relief. President Roosevelt has asked Congress for half that amount. Last week the Appropriations Committee threatened to cut the President's utterly inadequate recommendation to $1,000,000,000. And Senator King of Utah has introduced a resolution to eliminate federal work relief in its entirety in favor of distributing $850,000,000 among the various states.

The Roosevelt recommendations would cut the work-relief budget by 33 percent; in human terms, 500,000 persons would be left without support. The Appropriations Committee threat would cut 1,200,000 workers from work relief, or 60 percent of the present number. Senator King's resolution would mean that Georgia, which now allots five dollars relief per month per family, would spread the same sum among twice as many persons.

Representative Boileau and the Workers' Alliance need those wires and letters to your Congressmen and Senators in favor of H.R. 5822. This bill not only provides for a $3,000,000,000 appropriation for W.P.A. to hire 3,000,000 of the 9,000,000 unemployed at wage increases of about 20 percent, but another $1,000,000,000 for relief grants to the state on a matching basis.

Change of Pace

LAST week we deplored Harvard's decision to be represented at Goettingen this summer by any senior faculty member who happened to be in Germany at the time. It is pleasant to report that Harvard has since converted an ambiguous acceptance into an outright refusal. The secretary of the Harvard Corporation, in a statement this week, made it clear that "the president and fellows find themselves unable to send a delegate." Unable, he might have added, because American public opinion in general, and American academic opinion in particular, will make no compromise with Nazi neo-barbarism.

We are also glad to report that active prosecution of the Klein case at Brooklyn College, which we commented upon last week, has resulted in another victory for the Teachers' Union. The Administrative Committee of the college, over-riding the "recommendation for dismissal" made by Professor Jesse D. Clarkson, has offered a reappointment to Mr. Henry Klein. This offer is a clear recognition that Mr. Klein's alleged incompetence has not been established by the chairman of his department, a position which the union maintained from the beginning. At the same time, the union does not consider the case closed, since a salary increase has been denied to a teacher whose pittance of $1000 a year would normally have been raised.

Scientific Method

THE Manchester *Guardian* is our source of some interesting information on the "ritual murder" myth which the Nazis revived from the Middle Ages to per-

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secute the Jews of today. It appears that the Hitler mythology includes fifteen "historically proved ritual murders" beginning in 1244. The *Stürmer,* Julius Streicher's pornographic sheet, recently published a case history of a "ritual murder," allegedly committed in 1903. We reproduce the *Guardian's* report for the light it throws on the mental processes upon which the Nazis have based the most savage anti-Semitic orgy in modern history. It reveals a strange notion of scientific method.

"The story told by the *Stürmer* is that a child of ten was murdered on March 23, 1903, in a village near Saarbrucken. A number of arrests were made, but 'not one of the Jews' living in the village was arrested. 'Thus the murderer escaped.' But a boy of four saw the body. At sixteen he saw a Jewish butcher slaughter cattle, and he noticed that the wound made by the knife was the same as the murdered child's. He inferred that the murder was 'ritual murder,' and went about saying so. The butcher stopped him one day and upbraided him. He defended himself, and the butcher grew so agitated that he had a fit. Which proves 'that he must at least have known of the ritual murder, even if he was not himself the murderer.'"

For Whom Does Michael Williams Speak?

CONSIDERABLE stir has been aroused over two recent actions on Spain by the Catholic weekly, the *Commonweal.* In its issue of May 7, the *Commonweal* published an "Open Letter to Leaders of the American Press, on Spain" by Michael Williams, its editor. It is also sponsoring a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden on May 19, the proceeds of which will go to the Spanish rebels via Cardinal Goma, Vatican "ambassador" to the insurgents.

Mr. Williams charges in his "Open Letter" that an active policy of suppression of news favorable to the fascists has been pursued by most American periodicals owing to their sympathy for democratic government. His argument is somewhat confused and confusing because he tries, unsuccessfully, to play two roles at once. In some cases, Mr. Williams argues like an avowed and convinced supporter of the insurgent cause. In others, he poses as the disinterested onlooker interested solely in getting both sides of the question.

Consider the latter aspect first. Because he has not read as many dispatches from Burgos and Salamanca as he would like, Mr. Williams jumps to the conclusion that the fascists are bad propagandists. Now it is true, as Mr. Williams says, that the rebels do not treat foreign correspondents with "cordiality and camaraderie." But he fails to see that propaganda is one thing and letting correspondents see for themselves quite another. There are few eye-witness accounts from the rebel side because the fascist authorities do not permit eye-witnesses. This policy has little to do with the alleged insurgent lack of understanding of the value of public opinion. Quite the contrary. It is motivated solely by knowledge that they have something to hide: hundreds of thousands of German and Italian troops. Newspapermen are unwelcome *not* for the purely subjective reason ascribed to the fascists by Mr. Williams, but because of the objective presence of an army of alien invaders.

"I am the only correspondent who visited the Irish trenches at Madrid," wrote Francis McCullagh to the New York *Times* from London on May 6. "The Insurgents forbade any correspondent, and even their generals from other sections, to visit them." An appeal by Mr. Williams to the insurgent command for greater hospitality to foreign correspondents would be more logical than his appeal to the American press.

The destruction of Guernica by Nazi airmen is a case in point. The ample reports of this massacre were certainly "bad propaganda" for the fascists. When Father Aronteugi, mayor of Guernica, declared: "I swear before God and history that German airplanes viciously and cruelly bombed our beloved town of Guernica until they had it wiped off the earth," that was "bad propaganda." When Canon Alberto Onoindia of the Vallodolid Cathedral said: "I saw the bombing and burning of Guernica, one of the terrible crimes of this age," that was "bad propaganda."

But "bad propaganda" of this sort must not be confused with the truth. It is bad propaganda precisely because it is the truth. Advocates of the insurgent cause may rightly feel that such reports do not help to increase sympathy for the Spanish fascists. But they have no right to condemn the press for "partiality." The way to change this kind of "propaganda" is to change the objective facts upon which it is based. Again, Mr. Williams would accomplish more by appealing to the fascist leaders for cessation of their barbaric cruelty than by appealing to American papers for greater sympathy to the rebel side. Americans cannot and will not sympathize with those who wiped Guernica off the earth.

As an advocate of the insurgent cause, Mr. Williams tries hard to identify all Spanish Catholics with the rebel cause. Catholic supporters of the people's front are, in his eyes, only "a handful of rebellious priests," and some "extremely heterodox intellectuals avowing themselves to be Catholics."

Thus are the Basques, after centuries of fidelity, cast outside the pale of Catholicism. Yet these people are the spiritual descendants of those two stars of the church, St. Francis Xavier and St. Ignatius Loyola. Moreover, throughout Spain, before the rebellion broke out, there were only 35,000 non-Catholics. Practically all authorities agree that the chief hope of victory for the loyalists lies in their support by the majority of the people. This can only mean the majority of Catholics, because there are so few of other faiths.

It is simply not true that the Catholic people as a whole are supporting fascism, either in Spain or anywhere else. Ireland has the saint-like Father Michael O'Flanagan, now on tour in this country for the Spanish loyalists. Hundreds of Irish Catholics under Frank Ryan have proven their worth against fascism on the Madrid front while the battalion recruited by the Irish fascist, General Owen O'Duffy, beat a retreat to Ireland.

And what of Germany and the plight of the Catholics there? The *Commonweal* has never published an "open letter" in their behalf. Yet one of Hitler's oldest foes is Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich; and Father Rossaint and dozens of other Catholic clerics have been tortured and jailed merely because they tried to carry out the simple tenets of Jesus.

What of Belgium, where Cardinal Roey swung the electoral scales against the fascist Degrelle by calling publicly for his defeat? What of France, where the Catholic masses are by and large supporting the People's Front?

Or the United States? On the staff of the *Commonweal* itself unanimity is lacking. George N. Shuster, managing editor of the *Commonweal,* recently wrote a number of articles in which he expressed an anti-fascist position, stressing that "antipathy to the church will grow" if Spanish fascism wins.

The "Appeal to the Conscience of the World" by seventy-six eminent Americans against the massacre and destruction of Guernica is of profound significance because it rallied men of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths against a common scourge. The name of Michael Williams is not signed to this appeal, but perhaps the words, "we call upon all men of good will to protest this immense crime in the name of all that is sacred to human morality and human decency —and in the name of Almighty God," were in part addressed to him.

It is now his turn to answer.

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Americans and Russians in Spain

In two exclusive dispatches, a famous American journalist describes two revealing phases of life in the Spanish lines

By George Seldes

WITH the American Hospital Unit, Spain (by mail, uncensored).—Bombed twice by enemy airplanes, the American hospital unit, which has already undergone as terrific a period of activity as the American soldiers at the front, is also learning about the methods used by fascism. At the front the soldiers hear the explosive bullets which Mussolini has sent to Spain burst against their parapet; at this base Dr. Barsky, surgeon in charge, has the evidence both in metal and in wounds.

When the first American hospital unit arrived, it was as green as immigrants at Ellis Island once used to be. In Barcelona it was fêted and saw no trace of war. In Valencia it was the same. Even near the front it was almost too quiet for them. But one thing caused some comment. The Spanish medical head gave the order to remove the nice red crosses which had been painted on the ambulances in New York, and warned the Americans not to paint crosses on tents or buildings they occupied. In explanation, the Americans were given the absolute proof, much of it supplied by their predecessors, the Scotch and English ambulances, of intentional attacks by German and Italian fascist aviators on ambulances and hospitals in Spain.

The British hospital at Taracon was bombed. A nurse sitting outside the door had the chair blown out from under her, but escaped injury or shock. She then ran down the street to get two Spanish children she had watched playing near by, but found only bloody and charred bits of flesh.

The driver of the British Medical Aid Unit car (presented by British artists), Pat Cochrane, told me, in a south-Irish brogue so thick I could hardly understand the words, that "it is a common occurrence that bombing is concentrated on hospital units. Wherever our hospital unit has moved, town or open field, we have been bombed, and as a result we decided to use camouflage instead of the red cross with which our stuff was originally marked." Pat Cochrane, incidentally, is the lad who got the wounded motorcycle men into the ambulance the day several American correspondents got across the Arganda Bridge and gave the lie to the story from Burgos that the fascists had captured it. It was under machine-gun fire at the time.

At Colmenor the Scottish ambulance was bombed.

The first bombing of the American unit occurred shortly after its arrival near the front, on the night it celebrated the birthday of Dr. Goland with cake and wine. The lights were out, but there was radio music and laughter. Suddenly the air-raid signal was given. The celebration concluded on the second, every doctor and nurse going to the assigned station. Nine bombs came down almost simultaneously, the whole town being shaken as if by a terrific earthquake. One of the bombs did not explode. It was German.

"I would conclude," Dr. Barsky told me, "that the red cross rather attracts the attention of the fascist bombers." When the second unit arrived, under the leadership of Drs. Friedman and Posner, all its ambulances had to go to the military camouflaging station before being added to the main outfit.

Dr. Barsky is now the head of the American medical work in Spain. He has arranged with the republican authorities for the entire American effort to remain integral. One unit will be an advanced base, the main unit will occupy a hospital as near the front as possible, and the third unit which has now arrived and the fourth under way will be in charge of a convalescent and post-operative hospital in some quiet part of Spain.

"We had barely arrived in the country," Dr. Barsky told me the other day, "when the Jarama push began and our fresh outfit was moved to the front. We found an old hospital and converted it into the finest, cleanest, most efficient base in Spain. And not a moment too soon. The day after we were installed, the wounded began arriving by the hundreds in ambulances and trucks, and immediately we were at work. The wounded were everywhere. Soon there was no room in beds, then the stretchers gave out, finally there was no more room on the floor of the hospital and the wounded were laid on the ground so that you could not walk between them.

"For forty hours this outfit worked day and night without sleep or rest, operating on the wounded of the Jarama-Arganda battle. We were overwhelmed with work. Many of the wounded were American boys.

"The whole country is short of medical staffs and medical supplies. Spain could use another hundred ambulances right now, every sort of equipment imaginable, and hundreds more doctors and nurses. Our four units are very important because of the fact that there are so few ambulances and hospitals in comparison to the great size of the army and the preparations by the republic for driving the fascists out of the country."

I asked Dr. Barsky about the use of Italian explosive bullets by the Germans and Moorish mercenaries opposite the American trench system.

"There is no doubt of that," Dr. Barsky replied. "I am collecting this evidence of fascist atrocities. Every time we get an explosive-bullet case we save whatever bits of the explosive cap we find. The wounds caused by these bullets are terrible. They are worse than many horrible wounds caused by shrapnel and high explosive. If the bullets enter the shoulder, it makes only a tiny hole, but it explodes inside, tearing out whole parts of the back."

At the American base, doctors and nurses tell you that Barsky has done wonders. The Spanish think the same of the whole unit. There has probably never been an incident equaling that of the arrival of our ambulances at the Arganda battle and doing the work of veterans.

The hero of the hospital is J. Robert Raven, a boy of twenty-four, born in Ambridge, Pa., and until recently an interne in a Pittsburgh hospital. Raven was in the battalion which went up the hill against the Germans south of Arganda; he was shot in the shoulder and through both eyes. Dr. Barsky had to remove the remains of both eyes. Raven did not lose consciousness, he never winced, nor did he pity himself. He has not had one moment of despair. Unlike other soldiers in other wars, he has a faith, an ideal, that is stronger than death. He wants to live to fight fascism. He has seen fascism here, and blindness will not stop his future battles.

One of the American boys who has since died said to Dr. Barsky: "I would like to live a little longer; I know that we will destroy fascism in my own generation."

This is the spirit of the American effort, military and medical, in republican Spain.

MADRID (by mail, uncensored).—When I first arrived here, I started to hunt down the rumor that there were White Russians fighting on the side of the republic. In fact, I wrote a story in February saying that it would make a fine human-interest yarn, and that was a sort of admission of my failure.

The trouble is that the Spanish authorities are supersensitive about everything Russian. Most of the lies in the Red-baiting press have alleged the participation in this war of Soviet elements, and these lies have been the excuse the fascists have given for pouring infantry, aviation, tanks, and other units of their regular armies into Franco's ranks. Therefore the few Russian aviators on the government side have been shielded from the press, and the few experts who may be living in Madrid or elsewhere remain a mystery. I met only one Soviet

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Russian in months in Spain, a civilian engineer in Barcelona.

But now I have my Russian story. I have the proof that there are Russians in the Spanish republican army and that they are actually in the infantry, but I am afraid that my proof will not make the international fascists happy.

They are White Russians. Rumors can be true as well as false, and this rumor is true. The White Russians in the Spanish army are émigré Russians from all parts of Europe. Some of them have titles—princes, counts, what-nots, some titles about as good as those used by bright boys who marry millionaire Hollywood actresses, some better. Others are the sons of sugar kings, coal barons, oil dukes. They all belong to Society, more or less, some to the upper strata, some to the adventurous depths. Without exception they began life as the enemies of Soviet Russia. Either they or their parents were exiled as bourgeois or aristocratic enemies of the communist system.

Since 1917 the White Russians of Europe have been intriguing against Soviet Russia. The exceptions among the émigrés, the younger generation which professed friendship for the Soviets, which asked a visa for the fatherland or their fathers' land, were not trusted by the Russian embassies. Some of these younger men actually joined the French Foreign Legion and fought in Morocco and elsewhere. France was not their homeland, and Russia did not want them, and they did not give much for life itself.

When the civil war in Spain began, the fascist nations without delay sent military units to aid Franco. French volunteers later crossed the frontier and with Italians and others began the formation of the International Brigade. Presently Soviet Russia sent assistance, mostly airplanes and volunteer fliers. But the moment Soviet Russia showed its sympathies for the republic, a new hope entered the hearts and minds of several hundred long-lost White Russians living in exile in Paris and Brussels and the Foreign Legion. They could join the International Brigade. They could show they were as anti-fascist as other people and on the side of Soviet Russia and Spain in this universal ordeal.

Lieutenant Paul Levitin was a soldier in the French Foreign Legion. He is under thirty now, was brought to Paris by his family as a child, always pined for Russia, never could get a passport. Last summer he came to Spain. He is a brave soldier. Now he is a lieutenant, training Spanish troops—and happy in the knowledge that if he comes out alive he will be able to return to Soviet Russia, about which he knows nothing, but with which he has sympathized for a decade.

It was Paul Levitin who told me the story in uneasy English. Incidentally, he said that if I cared to, I could communicate through the American press with his brother, Joseph Levitin, last heard of in Belle Harbor, Long Island, in the fur business. "My bourgeois brother Joseph," as Lieutenant Paul Levitin calls him, with a decidedly unfriendly tone in his humorous voice.

"The White Russians," said Paul, "are mostly in the Franco-Belgian and the Dombrowski [Polish] battalions. The Dombrowski advanced six miles in the Briheuga battle; it was the actual spearhead of the attack; it is said to be the finest unit in the war. Well, as a member of the Franco-Belgians I admit that it covered itself with glory. I have seen the men since. The Poles will tell you that the White Russians with them fought like lions, they outfought their fellow soldiers, they risked more and gained more. I believe it. The White Russians are fighting for more in this war than any other crowd: they are fighting against fascism with the Spaniards; for their country, and to gain a fatherland they have never known."

MODERN POLITICAL CONTRETEMPS — William Sanderson

Some real sausages arrive at Germany's exposition of synthetic foods.

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Socialist Realism

The vexed question of art versus progaganda is explored from a broad view in this last of a series on the novel

By Ralph Fox

FIELDING, in discussing the theory of the novel, always emphasized its epic and historical character. You cannot, he insists, show man complete unless you show him in action. The novelist, he writes in one of the introductory chapters to *Tom Jones,* is not a mere chronicler, but a historian. His work, therefore, should not resemble "a newspaper, which consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not." The novelist, as opposed to the chronicler, must use the method "of those writers, who profess to disclose the revolutions of countries." That is to say, he must be concerned with change, with the relation of cause and effect, with crisis and conflict, and not merely with description or subjective analysis.

He explains, in another chapter, even more exactly, the role of the novelist, who must possess the faculty of "penetrating into all things within our reach and knowledge, and of distinguishing their essential differences." The qualities here called for he terms "invention and judgment," and at once denies that invention is simply the ability to create incident or situation. "By invention is really meant no more (and so the word signifies) than discovery, or finding out; or to explain it at large, a quick and sagacious penetration into the true essence of all the objects of our contemplation. This, I think, can rarely exist without the concomitancy of judgment; for how we can be said to have discovered the true essence of two things, without discerning their difference, seems to me hard to conceive."

This is excellent sense, as excellent sense as any man has ever written upon the writing of novels, and its author not unjustly heads the chapter of *Tom Jones* in which it is contained, "of those who lawfully may, and of those who may not, write such histories as this." The other qualities of a lawful novelist, or historian, as Fielding calls him, should be learning, and he mentions that Homer and Milton, the epic poets whom he acknowledges as his masters, "were masters of all the learning of their times," and after learning, the ability to "be universal with all ranks and degrees of men."

When the novelist again accepts Fielding's view of his functions, we shall have a new realism. Yes, a new realism, for clearly the discovery of the essence of things in our day, the ability to see essential differences, the ability to be universal with all men, cannot result in the mere restoration of the novel of Fielding or of Dickens. Today penetration into the essential differences must mean revelation of those contradictions which are the motive forces of human actions, both the inner contradictions in a man's character and those external contradictions with which they are inextricably connected. We cannot today be universal with all men unless we are able to understand how the relations between men have changed since Fielding's time.

Modern psychology has without doubt accumulated a mass of important material upon human character, in particular upon the deeper, subconscious elements in man, which the novelist must take into account. Yet this does not imply for a moment that these collections of psychological data can of themselves explain all human actions or human thoughts and emotions. Not all the work of Freud, Havelock Ellis, or Pavlov can allow the novelist to abdicate his function to the psychologist. The Marxist certainly denies the right of the psychologist to explain all processes of human thought or changes in the human psyche by purely subjective causes such as the Œdipus complex or any other of the formidable array of complexes in the psycho-analytical armory. You cannot give a picture of man in his individual "revolutions," as demanded by Fielding, you cannot truly penetrate the human personality in order to recreate it imaginatively, when bound by the purely biological view of the mental life which is presented by Freud, or by the purely mechanistic view of Pavlov and the reflexologists. Certainly, the modern psychologists have added enormously to the store of our knowledge of man, and the novelist who today neglected their contributions would be as ignorant as he is foolish, but they have failed entirely to see the individual as a whole, as a social individual. They have provided the basis for that false outlook on life which in Proust and Joyce has led to the sole aim of art being, instead of the creation of human personality, the dissociation of human personality.

Psycho-analysis, for all its brilliant and courageous probing into the secret depths of the personality, has never understood that the individual is only a part of the social whole, and that the laws of this whole, decomposed and refracted in the apparatus of the individual psyche like rays of light passing through a prism, change and control the nature of each individual. Man today is compelled to fight against the objective, external horrors accompanying the collapse of our social system, against fascism, against war, unemployment, the decay of agriculture, against the domination of the machine, but he has to fight also against the subjective reflection of all these things in his own mind. He must fight to change the world, to rescue civilization, and he must fight also against the anarchy of capitalism in the human spirit.

It is in this dual struggle, each side of which in turn influences and is influenced by the other, that the end of the old and artificial division between subjective and objective realism will come. We shall no longer have the old naturalistic realism, no longer have the novel of endless analysis and intuition, but a new realism in which the two find their proper relationship to one another. Certainly, the modern realists, the heirs of Zola and Maupassant, have felt the inadequacy of a method of their masters. But lack of dialectic, of a philosophy which enables them really to understand and to perceive the world, has led them along the false trail of supplementing that naturalism by a creaking, artificial symbolism. This is the gravest fault of those endless, powerful, but unsatisfactory works of Jules Romains and Céline.

How is it possible to make this combination, to break down the old division within bourgeois realism? First of all by restoring the historical view which was the basis of the classical English novel. Here let me emphasize that this does not imply merely the need for plot and narrative, for it is living man with whom we are concerned, and not merely the external circumstances in which man has his being. This is the mistake made by many socialist novelists who have used all their talent and energy to depict a strike, a social movement, the construction of socialism, a revolution, or a civil war, without considering that what is supremely important is not the social background, but man himself in his full development against that background. Epic man is man in whom no division any longer occurs between himself and his sphere of practical activity. He lives and changes life. Man creates himself.

It is only the fairest self-criticism to acknowledge that neither the Soviet novel nor the novels of western revolutionary writers have yet succeeded in fully expressing this, with a few rare exceptions. There is the best of excuses. The events themselves, the Russian civil war, the construction of socialist industry, the revolution in the life of the peasant, the fight against exploitation and the defense of the working class against fascism, all these things appear so heroic, so impressive, that the writer feels that by merely writing them down the effect must be overwhelming. Indeed, it is often of the greatest emotional significance, but an emotional significance which, nevertheless, is only that of first-class journalism. The

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writers do not add thereby to our knowledge of man, or really extend our consciousness and sensibility.

The historical event, Engels wrote, is anything but a simple addition of 1 + 1 = 2, a direct relation of cause and effect. "History makes itself in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each again has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event."

Both Engels and Marx considered Shakespeare to be the one author who solved in a supreme way the problem of the presentation of the human personality. Shakespeare's characters are their ideal of how the Marxist writer should present man, as being at one and the same time a type and an individual, a representative of the mass and a single personality. Engels in his interesting letter to Lassalle criticizing the latter's historical drama *Franz von Eickingen,* considers that the chief defect is Lassalle's adoption of Schiller's dramatic method in preference to Shakespeare's "realism." "You are perfectly right," Engels says, "to reject the prevalent stupid individualization, which comes down to mere petty philosophizing and represents an essential sign of a declining, epigone's literature. I think, though, that a personality is characterized not merely by what he does, but also by how he does it, and from that aspect it would not, I think, hurt the ideal content of your drama if the various characters were rather more sharply demarcated and opposed to one another. In our times the characterization of the *ancients* is already insufficient, and here, I think, you might well consider rather more the importance of Shakespeare in the history of the development of the drama."

Marx and Engels would certainly have agreed with Hazlitt's view of the Shakespearean treatment of character as "a continual composition and decomposition of its elements, a fermentation of every particle in the whole mass, by its alternate affinity or antipathy to other principles which are brought in contact with it. Till the experiment is tried, we do not know the result, the turn which the character will take in its new circumstances." This quality of unexpectedness, which shall at the same time be in accord with the inner logic of the historical event and of the character himself, is precisely what Engels had in mind when he wrote that what emerges from the conflict of individual wills "is something that no one willed."

It will be easily understood from what I have said so far of the Marxian view of realism that it does not at all correspond with the popular illusion concerning revolutionary, or proletarian, literature, that such literature is little more than a scarcely disguised political tract. Marx and Engels were clearly of the opinion that no author could write oblivious to the class struggles of his time, that all writers, consciously or unconsciously, take up a position on these struggles and express it in their work. Particularly is this so in the great creative periods of world literature. But for that form of writing which substitutes the opinions of the author for the living actions of human beings, they always possessed the greatest contempt. As early as 1851, in an article in the New York *Tribune,* Engels writes extremely critically of the literary movement in Germany from 1830 to 1848. "A crude constitutionalism, or a still cruder republicanism, were preached by almost all writers of the time. It became more and more the habit, particularly of the inferior sorts of literati, to make up for the want of cleverness in their productions by political allusions which were sure to attract attention. Poetry, novels, reviews, the drama, every literary production teemed with what was called 'tendency,' that is, with more or less timid exhibitions of an anti-governmental spirit."

In the letter to Miss Harkness on Balzac, written nearly forty years later, he is even more explicit. "I am far from finding fault," he tells her, "with your not having written a pinchbeck socialist novel, a *'tendenz Roman'* as we Germans call it, to glorify the social and political views of the author. That is not at all what I mean. The more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better for the work of art. The realism I allude to may crop out even in spite of the author's opinions." What Marx and Engels did insist upon, however, was that a work of art should conform to its author's outlook on the world, since only that outlook could give it artistic unity. But the author's own views must never obtrude. The outlook must not be preached, it should appear quite naturally from the circumstances and the characters themselves. This is true tendentiousness, the kind that has informed all great works of art, that can be seen, as Engels told yet another would-be socialist novelist, Minna Kautsky, Karl's mother, in both Æschylus and Aristophanes, in Dante and Cervantes, in the contemporary Russian and Norwegian novelists who "have produced splendid novels, all tendentious. But I think that tendency should arise of itself out of the situation and action, without being specially emphasized, and that an author is not obliged to give the reader a ready-made historical future solution of the social conflicts he depicts."

He develops this view further in the same letter by pointing out that in modern conditions the author's public must largely be drawn from the bourgeoisie, and that "therefore, in my view the socialist tendentious novel completely fulfils its mission in describing real social relationships, in destroying relative illusions concerning them, in upsetting the optimism of the bourgeois world, in sowing doubt as to the eternal nature of the existing social order, even though the author did not thereby advance any definite solution and sometimes did not even come down on one side or the other."

It is not the author's business to preach, but to give a real, historical picture of life. It is only too easy to substitute lay figures for men and women, sets of opinions for flesh and blood, "heroes" and "villains" in the abstract for real people tortured by doubts, old allegiances, traditions, and loyalties, but to do this is not to write a novel. Speeches mean nothing if one cannot understand all the processes of life behind any speech.

A revolutionary writer is a party writer, his outlook is that of the class which is struggling to create a new social order, all the more reason therefore to demand from him the widest sweep of imagination, the utmost creative power. He fulfills his party mission by his work in creating a new literature, free from the anarchist individualism of the bourgeoisie in its period of decay, and not by substituting the slogans of the party on this or that question of the day for the real picture of the world his outlook demands from him. He will be unable to make that picture a true one unless he is truly a Marxist, a dialectician with a finished philosophical outlook. Or, as Fielding would have put it, unless he has made a real effort to master the learning of his time.

Such a view of the artist implies that he excludes nothing from his perception of life. Proletarian literature is still very young, less than ten years old outside of the Soviet Union, and the reproach has often been made that, at least in capitalist countries, it has tended to deal only with certain men and with limited aspects of these men. The strike-leader, the capitalist "boss," the intellectual seeking a new faith—beyond these, it is suggested, the new writers have not ventured far, and they have succeeded only to a slight extent in showing us even these characters as men of flesh and blood. The reproach is to some extent justified, though it ignores the epic stories of Malraux, the novels of Ralph Bates, the work of John Dos Passos and Erskine Caldwell. Yet there is no human character, no emotion, no conflict of personalities outside the scope of the revolutionary novelist. Indeed, he alone is able to create the hero of our times, the complete picture of modern life, because only he is able to perceive the truth of that life. Yes, there have been few novels by revolutionaries free of those faults criticized by Marx and Engels. Much has yet to be done before the new literature is able to fulfill its tasks, and it will always remain true that you must have great novelists before you get great novels. On the other hand, the skeptic would do well to remember that in the grim battle of ideas in the world of today, the majority of the best of the writers of the bourgeoisie have begun to move sharply to the left, and that this movement has brought them into contact with declaredly revolutionary writers. From this contact we may be justified in hoping there will come the fertilization of genius which we are seeking, for it should have been made sufficiently clear in this essay that the revolutionary both accepts all that is vital and hopeful in the heritage of the past, and rejects nothing in the present which can be used to build the future.

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God Save King George!

The morning before the morning after finds it a rum go at Windsor Castle

By Robert Forsythe

GEORGE went out on the balcony the morning of May 12 and looked at the sky and held his hand out hopefully and said: "I think it's going to rain."

From the room behind Elizabeth said: "Will you come in from there before you catch your death? Rain or no rain, you're going to get crowned today."

"If it rains," said George reflectively, "if it rains particularly hard, they might postpone it, don't you think? After all, people can't be expected to sit in those grandstand seats if it's raining."

"Who cares what they expect?" cried Elizabeth from the room. "They're here, aren't they? They've paid for the seats. That's all you're expected to do about it."

"But it won't be pleasant for them," said George. "You have to admit that. And those people who have been standing out there on the streets all night won't like it either."

Elizabeth came to the door.

"Will you come in or must I bring you in?" she said. "What do you care about the people waiting in the streets? They like to wait in the streets."

George came in, protesting mildly.

"I guess it would be better if it didn't rain," he ventured, as if he wanted to be contradicted.

"Much better," said Elizabeth coldly, working on her face as she talked.

"Of course, the rain wouldn't bother us much," said George. "The royal coach has a top on it."

"And the roof of the Abbey has been fixed," added Elizabeth, a bit tartly.

"Oh, that Abbey," said George with a moan. "I was never so sick of anything in my life. It seems to me we've been rehearsing in that old barn for years."

"You just can't expect to walk through a ceremony like that," said Elizabeth.

"You know, Elizabeth," said George sadly, "I'm still afraid I'm going to forget something."

She stopped and turned around to face him.

"Now, George, that's ridiculous," she said. "You can't possibly forget the lines. We've been over them a hundred times."

"Maybe I'll stutter," said George despondently.

"George, listen to me," said Elizabeth severely. "You can mumble, can't you? Well, if you think you're going to stutter, just start mumbling. What do you think will happen if you miss a word? We didn't just win this crown in a raffle. They can't take it back if you happen to be a little stupid."

George looked at the royal robes lying over a chair and then turned back to his wife.

"You know, Elizabeth," he said, "sometimes I think you're more anxious about this business than I am."

She stood erect abruptly.

"You don't mean to say, George, that you're afraid to face your responsibilities!"

"No," he said piteously, "but I just don't think it's going to be much fun."

"One day out of your life for a coronation and you're complaining," she said bitterly.

"And then all those years of laying cornerstones and unveiling monuments," said George.

"Somebody has to unveil monuments," she reminded him.

"I suppose so," agreed George sadly, "but it's an awful bore."

He started to put on the robes.

"They're frightfully heavy and hot," he said.

"Yes," answered Elizabeth, "and the crown hurts your head and your feet ache, but you're going to be crowned king nevertheless."

"And you queen," said George, looking at her out of the corner of his eye.

"And me queen," said Elizabeth firmly.

George put one foot on the chair and looked out the window and was silent. After a long pause he said: "It looks as if it's clearing up." Elizabeth went on fixing her face and said nothing. George continued to reflect. Finally he said softly: "I wonder what David's doing about now?"

"Probably wishing he was where you are," said Elizabeth without turning around.

"I'll bet old David wouldn't have gone through all those silly rehearsals," continued George.

"That's all you know about it," answered Elizabeth. "He'd have gone through them until he collapsed. She would have seen to that. You know how the Americans are when they get Court crazy."

Martin

"The papers all say he's pretty happy now," said George. "They're going to get married."

"That's news," said Elizabeth.

"I don't suppose she's so bad," ventured George. "David seems crazy enough about her."

"She doesn't come in this house while I'm alive," said Elizabeth.

"Oh, of course not," said George hastily.

There was a knock at the door and an equerry came in.

"It's about time, Your Majesty," he said.

George stood up wearily.

"Will you help me with this thing?" he asked, and the equerry draped the robes neatly about the king's shoulders.

The king stood as if unable to make up his mind what to do next. He was thinking.

"Sir Basil," he said finally. "You know I don't think it would make much difference who was sitting in the royal coach today. Had you ever thought of that?"

"Why, no," answered Sir Basil. "I don't think I . . ."

"Sir Basil," said George tentatively, "what would you say if I asked you to wear these robes and represent me at the crowning?"

"But, Your Majesty," said Sir Basil, "wouldn't that make me the king then instead of you?"

"Yes, I suppose it would," said George.

"Will you stop that nonsense, George?" said Elizabeth, still working on her looks, but not bothering to turn around.

"But, after all, Elizabeth," said George, "you know yourself we're just symbols."

"There are worse things than being a symbol," said Elizabeth. "Will you get yourself together and take that look off your face? No matter how you may feel about it, you're not really going to your execution."

"No, I suppose not," admitted George sadly.

"And when we're in the coach, for heaven's sake manage a smile," said Elizabeth. "There's been a lot of money spent, and you owe something to your people."

He pulled his robes about him, squared his shoulders, and started to leave the room.

"You always know best, Elizabeth," he admitted glumly.

The door opened, there was the sound of trumpets, and George marched toward the door. As he crossed the threshold, the lines on the king's face became twisted up into a new expression. It was impossible to tell whether he was smiling or about to break into tears.

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"Well, that's that."

John Mackey

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Farmers in Politics

In the Dakotas and elsewhere the farmer-labor-party movement is developing a toughness corresponding to conditions of life

By Howard Rushmore

I LEFT Sisseton and hitched around other parts of North and South Dakota and some other mid-western states. Over west of the Missouri river I found the South Dakota homesteaders in a bad plight. This country, good only for grazing, had suffered a great deal from the drought, and the farm homes, as a rule, were in a pitiful state of decay. Stock farms were absolutely without water, and only few farmers had money to ship their cattle and sheep to the water country farther south.

One of them, ten years ago one of South Dakota's wealthiest stockmen, said: "I've got a mortgage on the land and buildings and on the stock: now unless we get rain in two weeks, I'll have to ship them out to the river. If I don't ship them, they'll die and the bank will slap it on me. And I can't ship them, for I can't raise a dime. If it don't rain. . . ."

I went by his ranch a month later: not one drop of rain had fallen since I talked to him, and the sheep were still there, thin as an Arkansas razorback.

Other farmers, who had made an effort to raise small grain on the land, were on relief, working in road-building gangs. I spent a day talking to a group of them, and all of them hated the work, but it was their only means of existence. One of the farmers had to come six miles with his team to work on the W.P.A. project; a walk of twelve miles a day in a sun as hot at dawn as at mid-day.

"It's hell," he told me. "My wife is sick and can't do the chores, so I have to hire a hand. I make sixty dollars a month on the project, pay him twenty-five dollars. And then I have to feed the team oats—this is hard horse work—and last month I didn't have enough left out of my check to buy a pair of overalls."

LATER, I spent two months in North Dakota. I had heard rumors that the farmers there were even more progressive than those in their sister state [see "Back to the Soil," NEW MASSES, May 11]. "Traditions of the old Nonpartisan League," one farmer had told me.

The editor of the *Nonpartisan Leader*, a husky young Swede, tried to explain it to me.

"A. C. Townley was one of the greatest organizers who ever lived," he said. "When A. C. got the idea of a farm organization to fight the Minneapolis grain companies and banks, he went out and got support from prominent farmers. Some of them will tell you that A. C. wasn't exactly honest, but he was a showman—used to hire an old crippled airplane and land in a hayfield; he'd talk half an hour from the wing and then sign up the farmers fast as they would come up. The N.P.L. did a lot of good things, but politicians gradually got hold of it and turned it into the Republican Party. But there are plenty of progressive farmers in it yet, and it will be the foundation of North Dakota's farmer-labor party in 1938."

But there are other organizations in North Dakota which carry on the fighting traditions of the old N.P.L. The state boasts one of the most progressive branches of the Farmers' Coöperative & Educational Union of America, and has a Farm Holiday Association that probably is one of the most militant in the country.

John Heliker

I attended many meetings of the Farmers' Union while I was in the state, but one local in Ward County stands out as a good example of what mid-western farmers can do when they organize.

The chairman explained to me in his tar-paper-covered claim shanty that "the Farmers' Union believes in the coöperative commonwealth; that through coöperation and elimination of the profit system we can end greed and misery without the use of force and violence."

"Of course," he added, "fascism presents a big problem; it's something you can't smother out with kindness. And I, for one, know that it would destroy our coöperatives, just as it did in Germany.

"We're not political, and try to keep politics out of our organization. But I think when the right kind of a broad, anti-fascist party comes along, the Farmers' Union will support it."

The North Dakota Farmers' Union has built many coöperatives, including a poultry coöp at Minot in Ward County. The farmers I talked to were unanimous in favor of it, and as one explained, "We all have a voice in it, and it's a real rank-and-file concern."

Aside from the coöperatives, the Farmers' Union issues educational material that is distinctly anti-fascist, and their state paper is one of the most progressive farm organs in America. The Juniors, as they call their youth organization, has an annual all-state camp, where the North Dakota Juniors always shine out as the progressive youth leaders.

Around New Rockford, where many farm struggles have taken place, I attended a joint meeting of the Union and the Farm Holiday Association. The Holiday was started in North Dakota, as in many other states, by the Farmers' Union, and served as their strong arm, drawing many other farmers into the struggle against foreclosures.

"It's not much of a joint meeting," the chairman explained to me. "The Farmers' Union was afraid that our coöps would be sued if we started direct action, so we built the Holiday to fight evictions. The Holiday, in every state in the '33 and '34 struggles, was a loose mass of farmers and not much of an organization, but it kept many a farmer on his farm. Now it's being organized along the right lines in this state, and drawing in lots of farmers who aren't in the Union."

They invited me to be the opening speaker that night, and I talked briefly on the struggle in Spain. After I had finished, I whispered to the chairman: "wasn't my talk a little too Red for these boys?"

He looked at me and grinned. "Sure as hell know you're from the East; it wasn't Red enough." And he gave the neatest fifteen-minute talk on fascism that I've ever heard given in any organization.

A few days later I rode over to Bismarck, the state capital, with one of the state officials of the Farmers' Union. He asked me quite a few questions about John L. Lewis and the C.I.O. Curious, I asked him if the Farmers' Union was interested in industrial unionism.

"Some day you'll see the organized farmers right in with the C.I.O.," he said. "I'd like to get Lewis out here on a speaking tour, and convince them that Bill Green didn't represent American labor when he knifed the Frazier-Lemke bill."

I RETURNED to Davison County, South Dakota, and got there in time for a picnic jointly sponsored by the State Federation of Labor and the Farmers' Union. Speakers urged that the quicker farmer and worker got together, the better. Later I attended the convention of the State Federation and heard them pass a resolution to support the Holiday and Farmers' Union in foreclosure fights, and to give them money and forces if necessary.

Early this year I saw another example of the growing solidarity of labor with the dirt farmer in Denison, Ia., where members of the Workers' Alliance, Farmers' Union, and Holiday were tear-gassed during a stay-in strike at the county relief office. J. C. Lewis, state president of the Iowa Federation of Labor, joined immediately in the demand for

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a LaFollette investigation of the incident, and protests from labor groups throughout the Great Plains poured into Denison.

This solidarity is definitely taking political lines in practically every state I visited during the ten months I spent in the "bread-basket" section of America. South Dakota's Farmer-Labor party is new and raw, but building a powerful foundation for itself. Oscar Brekke, a six-foot-four Norwegian farmer, is one of the main figures in its lineup, along with a host of other prominent farm leaders.

In North Dakota, progressives in the Nonpartisan League are looking forward to a third party in 1938, while the Iowa Farmer-Labor candidate for governor received 33,000 votes last November. Progressive farm groups have helped build and support the Minnesota and Wisconsin third parties.

After the few months I spent with these farmers, the growth of this sentiment for their own new party was not at all surprising. It is a far cry from the rough days in Davison County twenty years ago, but things have changed in the Great Plains. Farmers are the most practical people on earth: their very existence makes them that way, for they are accustomed to taking the cow to the bull, seeing her widen out and have her calf; when they sow they expect to reap, and when the seed doesn't produce they begin to raise hell, even though they are patient for many, many years.

The drought, the dust-storm, the millions of grasshoppers gnawing at the corn and small grain are almost certain to be common sights in the Great Plains again this year. There is little moisture in the soil, and where conditions are good for spring planting, the farmer cannot afford to buy seed. Curtailed drought-relief appropriations will cut down the road projects which were many a farmers' livelihood in 1936. Foreclosures have been increasing, and the many tramp cars of the dispossessed that dotted the western highways last summer will be another common sight this year unless something is done, and done in a hurry.

ALTHOUGH Secretary of Agriculture Wallace has some good ideas and many bad ones about the farmer and his problems, he has been checkmated on the tenantry proposals and his own ideas of rehabilitation, and such things as seed loans have been proved woefully inadequate. The administration has proposed nothing so far this year that will sufficiently aid the millions of poor farmers in the Great Plains, in spite of the fact that another light-crop year is certain and drought relief from '36 is still needed even before the hot winds of 1937 blister the corn blades to death in the cracked gumbo.

The shining hope for these millions of homesteaders and tenants—50 percent of all midwestern farmers are nothing but tenants—is the growth of their own progressive organizations, the Holiday and the Farmers' Union, and along with it, the growth of the farmer-labor party. The opening of a St. Paul office of Labor's Nonpartisan League, for the purpose of working jointly with the farm groups, was no accident: the forces of labor recognize what is happening in the minds of the middle-western farmers.

Some reactionaries still persist in saying that "give the farmer a piece of cut-plug and his Bible and he'll bother nobody." But a typical group of farmers who rolled up in a truck and called for their Holiday president near a little town in North Dakota not long ago weren't satisfied with that.

I was in the claim shanty talking to the president of the Holiday in that county when they honked and we went out to see what they wanted. I noticed the truck had a load of pitchforks and shotguns.

"Jump in, John," they told the Holiday leader. "We can't get relief no other way, so we're trying this." And they meant business: it took old John an hour to explain that filling relief officials full of buckshot and pitchforks wouldn't get them anywhere.

John wrote me later that some of them were sore at him for months.

(This is the end of a two-installment article by Mr. Rushmore, the first part of which was published last week.)

★ ★ ★

Mexican Village

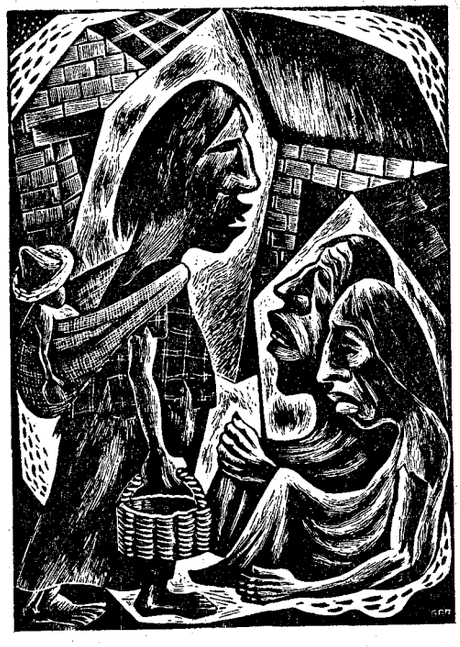
Only a body sure of its own true dignity
Could move in patterns of gravity like this
And build a frame of unbreakable tragic peace
While a faded zarape flutters.

Patience? That's it; yes, that's it, patience;
Not resignation, not wistful defeat, but patience
Balanced on the edge of a perfect unyielding spine
And stretched in a second skin over the mask
Of dull beaten copper.

Patience to squat on the cobblestones that lead to market
In the sun, in the shade, in the cold,
Waiting and waiting for the disputed piddling purchase;
Patience to shrink under distant impersonal leaves
As a curving rain seeks out the unthirsting body;
Patience to lie in a shroud of twisted newspapers
Against an absolute wall
Or sit upright all night in whatever doorway,
Only the eyes protruding from the blanket,
Motionless, tranquil, asleep,
Yet ready to stir and to face the first whole sound
And go.

Patience—ah, yes, a beautiful thing, patience.

Beautiful, too, on the day when the market squatter
And the homeless croucher in rain



Woodcut by G. Paz Peréz

And the newspaper sleeper and the sleeper in casual doorways
Suddenly and tremendously gather, patient,
Sturdy and firm with patience,
The flawlessly tilted head and the impeccable spine
Gently tautened by the hang of hard blunt fingers
Or lean steel fingers or reaching sinuous fingers—
And move in a speechless procession to their chattering, jittering masters.

Patience, then!
Remember that they do not leave easily,
That they dearly cherish the life they shaped for themselves
Through your steadily shattered yet incorruptible bodies,
Through the fiber and nerve of your inexhaustible patience.

And as you come home to the rich warm world you made,
A world you never had,
Come home in original dignity, in unfaltering patience.

Ah, yes, ah, yes, a beautiful thing, patience.

EMANUEL EISENBERG.

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HEW TO THE LINE

By Simon Eddy

WHAT Hitler chooses to refer to as Nazi Germany's second four-year plan is aimed at absolute independence from imports, towards which high and pure goal the nightmare program of *Ersatz* has been set into motion. *Ersatz* is substitution: synthetic rubber, petrol, and textiles are already in elaborate Aryan circulation, and unbounded extension is imminent.

This wouldn't have any connection with the thousand tons of mud just shipped from here to Deutschland (with 40,000 tons more scheduled to follow it during the year), would it? Our shipping company maintains the mud is to be used in a new chemical process for the reclamation of scrap metals. But you can't kid us. Already a convert to *Ersatz*, we can see the genius behind this move. A neat dish of mud, synthetic rose-colored glasses on your nose, and what have you got? Of course!—tapioca.

THREE YEARS AGO our hoarded gold amounted to only six billion dollars; today, being buried at Fort Knox, it touches twelve billion, which is a nice jump—and the U.S.A. offers to pay anyone $35 an ounce for more: twice the cost

William Sanderson

of mining the metal. One and a half billion dollars' worth of gold has been the annual average of government purchase.

After a nation has taken such care to accumulate more of a metal than anyone else wants and to hide it where it is sure not to be able to do any good, Sir George Paish, a British economist, has the audacity to declare that there is danger other nations will decide to do without gold permanently, in which case gold becomes entirely valueless. This looks definitely like a vicious blow at an American dream—and if former Mayor Bill Thompson of Chicago has any red blood left in his veins, he will stand up and renew the fine patriotic campaign he conducted against the late King George, and see that it touches Sir Paish and all of his fiendish colony-seeking friends.

PROFESSOR CLARKSON, head of Brooklyn College's history department, says he "fired" tutor Henry Klein because the man dared to pretend to his classes that the salt tax in prerevolutionary France illustrated inequality under a regime of class privilege. Klein was intensely active in the Teachers' Union—and

that wouldn't be the real reason for dismissal, would it, now? Should the single indelicate cry of "Liar!" or the larger voice of mass protest reach your anti-organizational ears as you strut regally away, Professor, never dream of turning, O saline sage; remember well the instance of the lady who married Lot.

MUTATIS MUTANDIS . . . and word-usage changes, too. Some of us are old enough to remember all the way back when "sectarian" was a religious designation and not an adjective of reproof for unimaginative politicalism; when "activize" belonged in chemistry and physics; and when "party line," far from meaning the course of conduct formulated by political groups, described a telephone connection where ten different families could listen in on the same call without being caught eavesdropping.

MUSSOLINI will add 25c. a week to your salary if you work in Italy and produce a child. An extra $3.75 is the reward for ten such creations. Should anyone in his right mind pay the remotest attention to this offer, it may yet revolutionize the business of Krupp, Thyssen, Schneider-Creusot, and du Pont, for it will be the cheapest price-scale yet achieved for the mass production of cannon fodder.

WE KNOW it's weakness and we know it brands us as an Unreliable Element, but we must confess to shuddering in advance embarrassment for the plight of an enemy and a menace. Joseph Goebbels stood up on May Day right in front of everybody and cried that "we have no right to reorder the historic events of the German past according to the critical measurements of our time." To all students of *sequitur*, this is clearly the preface to doom. Grab a-hold of your hats, boys, and duck while the inevitable ensuing thunderclap bursts: an injunction against regarding the *schöne* Adolf himself as infallible, God-inspired or—most horrible to contemplate—as representative on earth of (remember?) Thor. Only breakdown can follow that one.

ONE of the troubles with fascism in action, it seems, is that the damned thing doesn't work. George Seldes, in correspondence from Spain, points out that Italian fascists run from the front; their Caproni bombers break formation and run; their small tank has proved inadequate; and their motorized column hasn't worked well. Of the Nazis he says that their Heinkel plane has proved a failure; their Diesel oil-burning bombers are no good; their morale is terrible. Of Franco he observes that his attempted Red scare has been a dud.

Apparently fascism isn't very bright and it isn't very able. Well, all we know, as the feller said, is: even if it were good, we wouldn't like it.

Time, November 13, 1929. *Scene*, a certain suite of offices in the Grand Central Building. Enter, gently, a velvet-footed messenger.

MESSENGER (*in bell-like tones*): Mr. John J. Raskob?

RASKOB (*stirring testily from a snooze*): Yes, yes, yes, and what the hell do you want?

MESSENGER (*still bell-like*): I have a cheque for you of $4,606,000 from Mr. Pierre S. du Pont for securities you just sold him.

RASKOB (*stone-puss*): Du Pont? Never heard of him. (*Rips the cheque out of the messenger's hand. Opens lower left-hand drawer, pushes away a copy of the New York Herald Tribune and draws out another cheque which he thrusts at the messenger.*) See that this reaches your Mr. What's-His-Name and ask him whether he has any—er, oh, *you* know, securities!—that he'd like to sell to *me*. I want about $4,482,750 worth, please. Nice white ones.

(*Spotlight picks up messenger as he passes into adjacent office and repeats dialogue with du Pont. Stage now darkens for a moment to denote the lapse of a switchboard. When the full light floods, the two men have stepped out of their offices and are together behind the footlights.*)

RASKOB: Mr. du Pont, I presume?

DU PONT: Mr. Raskob, I believe?

RASKOB: Weren't both of today's transactions

unfortunate losses which we must both eliminate from income-tax figures?

DU PONT: Pal!

(*They embrace. Swift blackout.*)

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READERS' FORUM

Two letters on Spain—Another from the author of "Noon Wine"—Still another from Agnes Smedley

From Bishop McConnell

● I have just received the following cablegram from President Aguirre of the autonomous Basque Republic:

"Basque government is pleased to inform you that the alleged blockade of Bilbao is a thorough fiction as has been shown by entry into port by several British food ships for Bilbao to relieve suffering among thousands of men, women, and children now facing starvation in defense of their Catholicism and their liberties stop."

The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy is prepared to purchase large quantities of foodstuffs in London and send them to Bilbao immediately. For this purpose a fund of $25,000 is needed, and needed at once.

In the name of humanity, I appeal to your readers to respond generously and promptly to the cry for help which the Basque Catholics have raised. The people of Bilbao and the surrounding territories are literally starving. If it had not been for the courageous action of the British seamen who ran the blockade, stark tragedy would already have stalked the streets of every industrial city and peasant hamlet in the Basque republic.

But to date the supplies of food are pitifully inadequate to supply the needs of a population of 800,000 souls. May I ask your readers to remember the words of an unknown Basque poet: "Every hour wounds; the last kills." Give, and give generously, *now, before it is too late.* Make checks payable to: Helen W. Gifford, Treasurer.

BISHOP FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL.

From the Lincoln Battalion

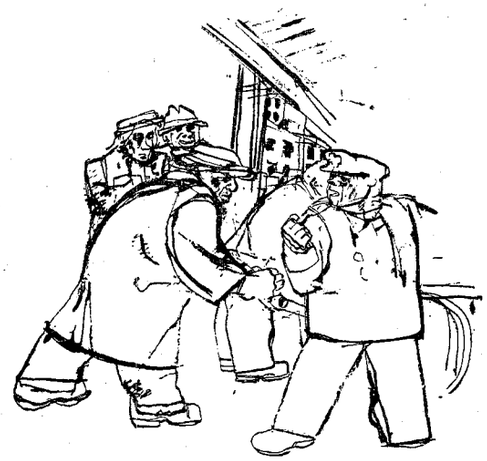
● Just a few words from one who misses sealing envelopes for the NEW MASSES. It is a glorious feeling for me to say that I am a member of that heroic band of anti-fascists — the International Brigade. I have seen young kids of sixteen and seventeen, girls eighteen years old, men of fifty—Czechs, Germans, French Moroccans, Americans—all courageously holding their ground and at present attacking against the best-trained troops of Hitler and Mussolini. It is a winning fight, and the Americans are helping in defeating those troops of international fascism.

I am sorry that I have to bring sad tidings—the death of our friend Dan. He died in our attack of February 27. He was a hand grenadier and was always in the forefront when we went "over the top." His loss is a great one, but we shall go forward and finish the job that Dan wanted done: the annihilation of fascism in Spain and then in the rest of the world.

I was wounded in the same attack and am still in the hospital having to hobble around on crutches. It is a strange sight seeing a fellow 6 ft. 2 in. weighing 180 lbs. hobbling along as an invalid. It seems that I will be here for some time, resting on the shores of the Mediterranean. M.

On "The Wave"

● It will be a great pity if people who wish to see a fine picture miss seeing *The Wave* [see NEW MASSES, April 27] through placing too much confidence in the judgment of certain newspaper reviewers. I spent a beautiful evening at that picture, and I have seen it again, and mean to see it at least once more, for I saw many things at second view I had in my absorption missed at the first. The pictures I have really liked, and I judge them by the vividness of the memory they left, a continuing sense of their qualities, are few: an early comedy of Chaplin's called *Shanghaied, Potemkin, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Chang, Man of Aran,* a Zulu picture with Zulu actors speaking their own language, *La Soeur Noire,* a Russian tragi-comedy



John Heliker

called *La Frontière* (these last two I saw in Paris, and I fear they may never come here), *Carnival in Flanders,* and *The Wave.* This is a short list, and I know I have missed many fine pictures, but in this company *The Wave* seemed to me as good as the best of them, perhaps the best picture I ever saw. The photography, the actors, the scene, the theme, and the music were all so firmly woven, so harmonious, the effect was as satisfactory as one of those old fine Mexican blankets, a perfect thing of its kind and unassailable on its own grounds.

The light, clean photography, so clear and yet so deep, reminds me of the work of Edward Weston and Tina Modotti, his pupil in Mexico; to my mind it is the very best school, and Strand has added his own gifts to the method. Revueltas has composed his music as Strand composed his scenes; ordinarily the reviewers must be content with less than this. What more did this picture need to draw their praise? They have not always been so hard to please.

Did they not like the acting? How could it have been more suitable for the purposes of this picture? Do you suppose the theme made them vaguely uncomfortable? Maybe these oppressed and struggling Indians were too civilized for them, brought up as they were on gangster films. The political slant? It is a primer, it can hardly be called political at all. It is a story of men asking for bread in exchange for work, then learning slowly that they must not only work for bread, but fight for it. I think I can see why such humane statement of this perpetual worker's predicament might make them uncomfortable. But must they always be comfortable? From the purely visual point of view, could anyone ask anything more beautiful than the scenes of the casting and drawing of the nets, or that hair-raising procession across the water at the end, with the tremendous oar-music? A funeral march for more than just one little defeated man, that music promised a resurrection on earth.

The beauty of the men, the beauty of the woman seated watching the burial of her child, wouldn't you think that should have pleased the reviewers? Or was it the wrong kind of beauty for them?

These are not rhetorical questions. I am asking seriously, not what is wrong with that picture, but what is wrong with most of the reviewers? One of them, after praising everything else, remarked that Americans would be bored with its slow pace. The slow pace, both in action and speech, I believe are right; it is the handsome, deliberate pace of the Indians of the hot countries. If it is too slow for our speedy American reviewer, if he is bored, all the worse for him. If he will consent to slow down a little, he will see more, and better. . . .

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER.

Miss Smedley's Position

● I am informed from various sources that many sensational articles have appeared in the press of America and China about myself. I have not seen these articles, but from what I hear they make many false and sensational statements connecting me, among other things, with the Chinese Communist Party, with the Communist International, or simply charging me with conducting "Communist propaganda." One photograph of mine appeared in an American magazine referring to me as "Mou Tse-tung's ally," and a recent short article in the *China Weekly Review* of Shanghai even stated that I was an "adviser" to the Red leaders.

These statements are utterly false. I am a free writer, writing freely and without direction from any individual or organization. For the time being I am living as a guest in the Soviet regions, collecting material for a new book. But neither now, nor in the past, have I had any organic connections with any Communist Party anywhere.

Yennanfu. AGNES SMEDLEY.
March 27, 1937.

Cars, for Whom?

● Joseph North, in his article, "The Social Magic of the Sit-Down," in the May 4 issue of the NEW MASSES, quotes one of the strikers in the Hudson Motor Co. works as saying, "I worked ten years on the belt; never owned a car." This reminds me that about two years ago I wrote Mr. Cameron, the man with the querulous voice who sets the nation right on all issues each week in the middle of Henry Ford's Sunday evening radio program, asking him to tell me how many new Ford cars had been bought by Ford workers the previous year.

As might have been expected, Mr. Cameron's reply was a gem of evasiveness. I wrote back at once and asked him to answer my question but never heard from him again.

The latest *Who's Who* gives very little information on Mr. Cameron except to mention that he has been a minister of the "Gospel," and that he was the editor of Ford's notoriously anti-Semitic Dearborn *Independent,* which was stilled by public indignation several years ago.

Yet such are the bigwigs of the motor industry who denounce sit-down strikers, but they carefully conceal the fact that their workers never are paid a living wage—much less a wage that would permit them now and then to buy one of the shiny new cars they build.

JOHN PONIARD.

John Heliker

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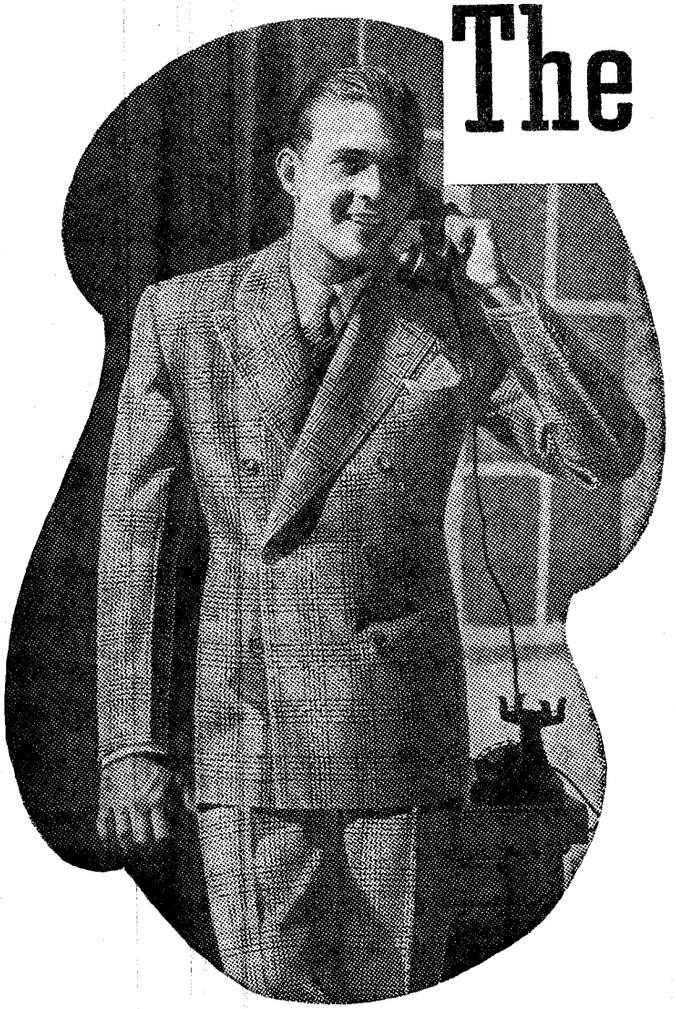
The Howard Drape

Retains Its Shape!



Young men, middle aged men and even men who customarily wear conservative clothes are showing great favor for the Howard drape model. It seems to do something for the smart dresser. It makes a man up in years look younger. It gives the younger man that sophisticated broad shouldered athletic appearance he usually seeks. It provides a more flattering front for every type of man and offers an incomparable degree of comfort and smartness. The utmost skill and good taste have been exercised by our woolen experts in selecting the proper patterns and colors for these particular models. No wardrobe is complete without at least one drape model. You owe it to yourself to come in and try one on. You will gain a new appreciation of genuine style smartness . . . a fresh conception of real clothes comfort . . . a new realization of outstanding clothes value.

Every size is here to fit men of every proportion . . . regulars . . . shorts . . . extra shorts . . . stouts . . . short stouts and long stouts up to 52 size. No matter what your size . . . you'll prize Howard Clothes!

Howard Suits . . . Topcoats . . Tuxedos and Full Dress . . . $22.50 ALL ONE PRICE

No Charge for Alterations

Made by the highest skilled UNION TAILORS

. . . right in the Howard giant daylight tailor plants. The Howard skilled craftsmen are quality minded. Theirs is an art where pride and craftsmanship still prevail. . . . where the skill of the hand of the master supplements the accuracy of the modern machines . . . to maintain the Howard high standard of precision workmanship . . . to assure quality . . . to give Howard customers the greatest clothes value that money can buy. You owe it to yourself to acquaint yourself with Howard Clothes.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Granville Hicks on some books of the month—The English mercantilists—American and Chinese fiction

THE book of the month that has most interested me is Ralph Fox's *The Novel and the People,* which combines in almost ideal proportions breadth of sympathy and clarity of analysis. No one could call the study sectarian, and yet it is free from the kind of wishy-washiness that, in the name of broad-mindedness, praises all writers of the past indiscriminately. Fox saw in the novel one of the great achievements of bourgeois culture, an achievement that still has incalculable importance for the future. The growth of the novel, however, was checked by the rottenness of capitalism, and it is only in a socialist society that its potentialities can be realized. So his argument runs, sustained by an intimate knowledge of French and English literature and by fine insight into the creative process. If anyone needs to be reminded how talented a comrade was lost when Ralph Fox died in Spain, *The Novel and the People* will serve as a poignant memorial to the vigor of his mind and the firmness of his revolutionary spirit.

Another book that comes to us from England and from a fighter for Spanish democracy is Ralph Bates's *Rainbow Fish.* And at last Bates is beginning to attract the attention that some of us said he deserved when his first novel, *Lean Men,* appeared. It can, of course, surprise no reader of the NEW MASSES to discover that it is *Rainbow Fish,* which is in no overt sense a revolutionary novel, that wins the applause of the old-line reviewers. The critics have been discerning enough all along to see that Bates is a man of talent, but many of them were just a little loath to praise such a book as *The Olive Field. Rainbow Fish,* however, is safe, and the reviewers can let themselves go and salve their consciences.

Yet true conservatives, if they were really astute, could take little pleasure in Bates's new novel. Though I confess that it seems to me less important than *Lean Men* or *The Olive Field,* and though certainly it makes no direct assault on the capitalist system, many of its virtues grow out of the author's revolutionary convictions. Its deep sympathy with the poor fugitives who are its central characters, and its profound understanding of the forces that have made them what they are, reveal, as Jack Conroy has said [NEW MASSES, April 20], the qualities that sent Ralph Bates into the loyalist army. At the same time, the structure of the novel shows a technical advance over Bates's earlier work.

Applause in certain quarters for *Rainbow Fish* reminds us that bourgeois critics often have a blind spot when they approach a novel dealing with the class struggle. How many critics have had spasms of ecstasy on reading John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* who could not find a good word to say for *In Dubious Battle!* Recently the curious functioning of certain of these critical minds has been exposed in their reviews of Josephine Johnson's *Jordanstown.* Except for Edith Walton's fine review in the Sunday *Times,* the book has fared badly indeed—for reasons anyone can guess. Though I admit that there is something to be said against the book, as well as much to be said for it, it does seem to me clear that it has all the virtues of *Now in November,* and at the same time, as Miss Walton pointed out, it is free from the nostalgic qualities that seemed a little ominous in the earlier book. Yet the critics have not praised *Jordanstown!*

Look at Bernard DeVoto's review in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for April 3. According to Mr. DeVoto, Miss Johnson has "forsaken her instinctive best in order to pursue an idea," she "has been glad to sacrifice the artist to the human being," and "she has chosen to abandon what only she can do in order to do what she is not best fitted to do." He fills two columns with expressions such as this, and then concludes: "The loss of a first-rate psychological novelist is too high a price to pay for a second-rate sociological novelist, or even a first-rate one." Just how a psychological novel is distinguished from a sociological one, or why the former is inherently superior to the latter, or in what way *Jordanstown* is less psychological than *Now in November,* Mr. DeVoto does not tell us. The point seems to be that the earlier novel deals with the "depths and dark places of the soul," whereas the latter deals with "the disinherited . . . with their suffering, their fellowship, their exploitation and betrayal, and their efforts to help themselves." The former is art; the latter is journalism and second-rate sociology.

I have no doubt that Mr. DeVoto is sincere; he could not otherwise have written so eloquently confused a review. What is one to conclude? Simply that non-literary judgments get in Mr. DeVoto's way when he tries to criticize such a book as *Jordanstown.* Even the most practised critic cannot always command his passions and his prejudices when he reviews a book. If, let us say, one had been in a terribly tragic automobile accident, could one read with perfect objectivity an account of a collision? Would not all sorts of emotions be set up that would come between one and the printed page? So it is, I believe, with Mr. DeVoto and many other critics when they read books about the class struggle. The subject is so distressing that the book in question has on them the effect of a bad book. Therefore, in all sincerity, they condemn it, and find whatever reasons they can to justify their doing so.

DeVoto and his kind are constantly expressing their scorn for Marxist criticism, but I think we do not have to worry much. Despite the assertions, repeated again and again during the past five years, that Marxism would turn out to be another fad, the general principles and methods known as Marxist continue to win the respect of critics who have demonstrated their understanding of literature and of the American scene. Several years ago T. K. Whipple wrote a book called *Spokesmen,* not

Boy Playing Marbles

Painting by Luis Arenal

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Beds full – Ether gone – Gangrene sets in

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Somewhere in Spain

A Letter Received from One of Our Nurses in Madrid

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Then overhead, we heard the fearful drone of Fascist bombers, several of them. Spotting our hospital in the white moonlight, they let go a score of bombs. Oh how I have learned to hate white moonlight! None hit us, but they put out our lights. In almost utter darkness, with two flashlights to help, the operations were continued!

You have never seen such spirit. One day we were very crowded. A young Spaniard who had been waiting for treatment for hours became impatient. Unseen by us, he took out his pocketknife, cut open the palm of his hand and himself removed the imbedded bullet, and so many others suffer terribly, awaiting their turn to be treated.

Withal I have never been so happy. We are so badly needed here I often wonder what would happen if we were not here. I have the opportunity here, the rare one, of working and feeling of value.

These are not ordinary men dying. These boys, voluntarily, go out into the lines in the real struggle against Fascism for you and me, for the Spanish people and the liberty and democracy of the whole world. Yes, I weep when one of them goes out before my eyes.

A last word and the most important. We need supplies desperately. Ether, gauze, hypos, tetanus anti-toxin especially. More everything—and more doctors and nurses, quickly. Thousands of boys are dying. We can save them if we have supplies. Beg, if you must, do anything. Tell the American people they simply must help. Don't let them forget us. They can never fill the need here, but they must never stop trying.

Urgently,

Rose.

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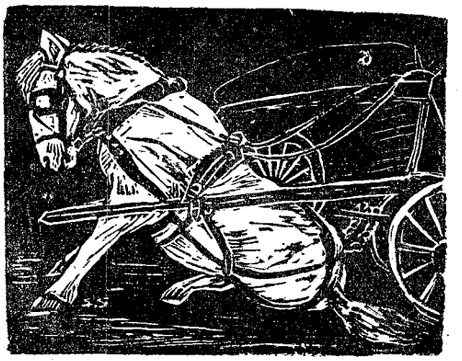
in any sense, I think, a Marxist book, but a book full of insight and very shrewd, as time has proved, in its predictions. Now, in a recent issue of the *New Republic,* in a commentary on that magazine's series of revaluations, Professor Whipple arrives, by his own route and with many fresh perceptions, at essentially the conclusions Marxists have been advancing as long as there have been Marxists. He is not just repeating; he not only confirms but also strengthens; thus Marxist criticism grows.

Speaking of the *Saturday Review,* I recall that several weeks ago Dr. Canby was inspired to write an editorial by a telegram from the Western Writers' Congress. The Congress objected because the chapter on the U.S.S.R. in *We Cover the World* [reviewed by Hy Kravif in this issue] was to be written by William Henry Chamberlin, "notorious for anti-Soviet bias." This, said Dr. Canby, is condemning a book in advance. And so it was. But, as it happened, John Gunther, three weeks later, reviewing *I Cover the World* in Dr. Canby's magazine, asked, "And why not at least one friendly word from someone who is today in the Soviet Union?" In other words, the Western Writers' Congress, though it had not seen Mr. Chamberlin's chapter, was quite right in anticipating anti-Soviet bias. Dr. Canby, who holds that revolutionaries have closed minds, does not seem to realize that there are persons on his side of the fence whose reactions are fairly dependable. When lines are sharply drawn, you don't have to wait until you've been socked in the jaw before taking your hands out of your pockets.

Among the predictable characters of our day, the safest bet of all is Isabel Paterson. On April 18 she said, for the third or fourth time, that you could put no dependence on the Webbs because they were not disinterested. "They had spent their lives advocating certain theories. . . . Their lives, their reputations were staked on those theories. . . . So the theories were put in effect in Russia. . . . Is it likely that the Webbs would admit they were all wrong, and didn't work out as guaranteed?" Somebody, you see, told Mrs. Paterson that the Webbs were Socialists. She simply doesn't know that all their lives they have opposed the theories of Marx and Lenin, the theories on which the Soviet Union is founded. She doesn't know, and doesn't want to know, that the Webbs quarreled with the labor theory of value, and with the whole Marxian theory of economics, staunchly upheld gradualism and parliamentary democracy, condemned the dictatorship of the proletariat. She doesn't know that the Webbs were Fabian Socialists, and that fabianism is considerably closer to Lloyd George's pre-war liberal program and to the New Deal than it is to Bolshevism. Saying that the Webbs must have been prejudiced in favor of the U.S.S.R. because they were Socialists is like saying that Bible-belt Methodists must be prejudiced in favor of the Pope because they are Christians. But the ignorance of Isabel Paterson is probably invincible, and little can be done about the prejudices of a



Sid Gotcliffe

DeVoto. The most one can say is that it may be useful to place their more flagrant absurdities on record.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Before Adam Smith

PREDECESSORS OF ADAM SMITH, *by E. A. J. Johnson. Prentice-Hall.* $3.50.

THE economic thought of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century capitalism, prior to Adam Smith and the Industrial Revolution, is often incompletely understood by economists, even by some of those with a Marxist training. It is insufficient, not to say misleading, to label the early economists as naïve mercantilists, absorbed in spreading a fallacious balance-of-trade doctrine. Nor is it sufficient to regard them as mere foils for the polemics of Adam Smith, although in part they were such. More important is the fact that early capitalist economists were enormously interested in the expansion of the productive forces of the time.

Professor Johnson of Cornell has done competent and painstaking research in this field. While he is apparently not a Marxist, he shows a distinct theoretical insight, which brings his work close to that of historical materialism. His materials could easily be incorporated into a Marxian framework. In the present volume he is concerned chiefly with the fabric of ten important British writers whose work stretches from 1549 to the middle of the eighteenth century. They are Hales, Malynes, Misselden, Mun, Petty, Grew, King, Hume (his economic doctrines), Postlethwayt, Steuart. What Professor Johnson calls the "material and intellectual inspiration" affecting these writers is not neglected. The concluding third of the volume is devoted to an elaboration of "A Primitive Theory of Production" which cuts across the ten headliners mentioned above, and includes other figures of the time. This part of the volume particularly would have been improved by a more thoroughgoing and consistent recourse to the instrument of historical materialism—an instrument of which the author may have been more fully aware than his explicit references would at first indicate.

William Petty is perhaps the most interesting single figure in Johnson's galaxy. Students of *Capital* will recall the frequency of Marx's allusions to Petty and the respect which Marx held for Petty's contributions. Best known, of course, is Marx's quotation from Petty: "While labor is the father of material wealth, the earth is its mother." In developing Petty's views on production and on value, Professor Johnson shows that "when Petty styled labor 'the father and active principle of wealth' and land the 'mother,' he stated concisely a doctrine which runs through English writing from Latimer to Steuart."

We might add here that the transition from this viewpoint to a full-fledged labor theory of value (i.e., value as distinguished from wealth), and to an analysis of capitalism in terms of the production of surplus value, marks the main line of development in economic thought from Petty to Marx, by way of Smith, Ricardo, and the "classicists." One of Petty's contemporaries, John Bellers, showed a homely insight into the essential character of surplus value. According to Johnson, "John Bellers said as emphatically as Adam Smith afterwards did that human labor is a veritable mine of wealth because 'laboring people do raise and manufacture above double the food and clothing' they use themselves; were this not true, 'every gentleman must be a laborer, and every idle man must starve.'"

Emphasis on the expansion of the productive forces provides a clue to an understanding of many of the specific features of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century British economists. Almost without exception, they condemned idleness and luxury and advocated encouragement to population, all with a view to expanding production. Mercantilist stress on national governmental authority, as well as the balance-of-trade doctrines, appear, by Johnson's showing, to be largely instrumental to this end. Consequently, it may be said that the earliest capitalist economists stand on a certain common ground with Adam Smith, who also placed production expansion in the forefront, but who chose *laissez-faire* as the instrument for attaining that end. Today, with capitalism in decline, neither mercantilism nor *laissez-faire* are satisfactory instruments for expansion. While the current answer to the production problem is found in Soviet economics, the intellectual heritage of the early capitalist economists is not lightly to be dismissed. Professor Johnson has given us a valuable study of that heritage.

ADDISON T. CUTLER.

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ent who has covered the Soviets in recent years has been so consistently antagonistic. Chamberlin's characterization of his own attitude as one not of "violent aversion," but of a "kind of detached neutrality" will surely rank with the masterpieces of understatement for those who have followed his anti-Soviet outpourings. Especially since a few pages later he confesses to "a basically negative evaluation of communism in theory and practice." Square that with his avowed "detached neutrality" if you can.

Among the more important contributions are those of Linton Wells, who covered the Ethiopian war for the New York *Herald Tribune,* and Randall Gould's "China in Revolt." Wells does not permit his "reporter's job to report" to hide the "obligation of an honest man" to tell the truth about Italian fascism's Ethiopian campaign. In the same way Gould, dealing with the revolutionary China of 1926-27, acknowledges that "objectivity" did not prevent his giving the Left more than passing sympathy; a sympathy which he does not regret to this day.

I found Webb Miller's account of the "Little World War in Spain"—in which he still found no peace—somewhat disappointing. Covering the war on the rebel side, Miller dwells largely on details, without probing the deeper aspects (except in a brief sentence at the end); which, I take it, is or should be the duty of a good correspondent.

The dullest pieces are the very first two: one by James Mills, veteran AP man; and the other by Karl von Wiegand, who tell us of his aviation enthusiasms and his air exploits for "the Chief," that is, "Mr. Hearst." Also represented are Negley Farson on India, Hallett Abend of the New York *Times* on the Far East, Jack Starr-Hunt who has covered Mexico for the Ogden Reids the past sixteen years, and Lyons on Persia. One wishes for the inclusion of a chapter by John Gunther on Hitler Germany, a subject which receives only the scantest attention here. And an obvious question mark arises in connection with the omission of Walter Duranty—undoubtedly one of the world's best-known newspaper correspondents.

HY KRAVIF.

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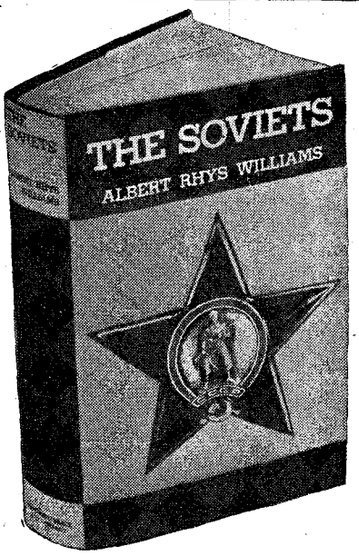

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Rhys Williams worked on this book for ten years. Previous to that he had lived in Russia for nine years. Among the features of the book are: complete biographies of Lenin and Stalin, discussion of the meaning and nature of the New Constitution; data on all the nationalities in the Soviet Union, intimate details about daily life, countless new facts on all phases of Soviet activity.

Among the many comments from authorities is this from John Strachey: "It will be absolutely indispensable to everyone who is interested in the Soviet Union; but I can see that it will be far more than a reference book. In almost every section the reader detects Rhys Williams' unique knowledge of Russia and the Russian people. There is a richness, a feel of first-hand contact with his material which makes every page delightful reading."

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of a great oriental nation in a state of rapid transformation.

The first part of the book consists of a group of six stories and an essay by Lu-hsun, the Chinese Gorky, whose untimely death five months ago was a great loss to the world progressive movement. Lu-hsun's position in the history of the modern Chinese short story corresponds somewhat to that of Poe in America. Like Poe, Lu-hsun, by his creative genius, set standards and examples for that form of literature at a critical moment in its development. His sound realism and simplicity of style rooted the modern Chinese short story in healthy soil. And so, not only because of their historical importance but also because of their consummate art, unsurpassed by a whole young generation of Chinese writers, it is only proper that a prominent place in Mr. Snow's collection should be given to Lu-hsun.

Seventeen stories by other outstanding Chinese writers, and a scholarly essay on modern Chinese literature by Mr. Nym Wales make up the main content of the book. After carefully reading through these stories, I found that those which depicted group action or mass psychology, relying heavily on background and dialogue to convey their social significance, were less successful in translation than those in which an individual character and his plight formed the central theme. For this reason, American readers will perhaps find such stories as "Mud," "The Third Sun," "Voyage Beyond Law," which communicate so much to the Chinese, less impressive and interesting than "Slave Mother," "Ah Ao," "Wistaria and Dodder." This does not necessarily imply that these stories are inferior: it simply shows the difficulties inherent in any translated literature. On the whole, the stories are eloquently, sometimes too eloquently, rendered.

At the end of Miss Pearl Buck's brilliant review of the same book in the March issue of *Asia,* she added that the editor's personal bias caused him to omit some of the finest stories because they were not Left (although she did not name any). Mr. Li Yu-tang also suggested that with two exceptions the writers included represent the leftist school. But anyone who reads Mr. Wales's article on modern Chinese literature will agree that this is not at all the case—unless the word "left" applies to all writings that are sincere, alive, and realistic; all writers who are humanitarians, democrats, liberals, anti-feudalists, anti-imperialists, and anti-fascists. If these writers have for years been dominating the Chinese literary scene; if the best of them face toward the Left; if the escapists, art-for-art's-sakers, even with substantial official backing, remain obscure and unwanted, Mr. Snow is certainly not to be held responsible. It is simply that the socio-economic conditions in China have reached such a stage of development that only by acquiring a historical perspective and revolutionary outlook can a writer hope to approach the objective truth. H. CHEN.

Frank Davidson

New Patterns

CENTRAL STANDARD TIME, *by Harlan Hatcher. Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.* $2.50.
NOT ALL RIVERS, *by Adriana Spadoni. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $2.50.
ALL GOOD AMERICANS, *by Jerome Bahr. With an introduction by Ernest Hemingway. Charles Scribner's Sons.* $2.50.

ALTHOUGH no one of these books is of the first order, they are worth attention because they indicate the change taking place in old patterns of thinking and writing that prevailed from the twenties until recently. Today's intensified class conflict and the advancing march of labor, the awakening of farmers and professionals, have changed the attitudes and shifted the emphases of writers in their handling of conventionalized themes and in their search for new material.

Here, for instance, we have Mr. Hatcher, the professor who wrote a book on the versification of Browning and delivered literary lectures to clubwomen, writing *Central Standard Time,* a strike novel. Unfortunately, the impartial point of view attempted by the author short-circuits the emotive power inherent in the situation. Neither boss nor worker involved in the strike has the anger and fear and tension that real participants in the struggle know. The choice of material shows a consciousness of general social change: but certainly the campus is in transition too, and if Hatcher were to write about what the students' and teachers' unions see under his nose we might have a better book.

Not All Rivers introduces a variation on the theme of the large number of novels that deal with the middle-class woman's attempt to escape from the smugness of her family and to find happiness. Like all the others, Miss Spadoni's heroine is "intelligent, sensitive, and ambitious." But after taking Rhoda through the usual cycle of searing experiences, the author does not wind up with self-fulfillment discovered in the creation of fifth-rate paintings or in the rearing of a lovely child. Rhoda and her husband, professional people, come to understand that there is no dividing line between the workers of hand and brain, that the conflict is "between those who have grasped the power to oppress their fellow men and those against whom they try to use that power." They know that they belong among the last and must stand together with them. Miss Spadoni has taken her heroine far beyond the stage reached by most of her fictional contemporaries. The book is not dramatic but it is

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Jerome Bahr's thirteen short stories about Poles, Germans, and Norwegians living in Wisconsin exploit a rarely touched vein in small-town tales. The dominant element is a sound and lusty humor, the product of a live knowledge of and sympathy for these first-generation Americans. The introspective pieces in the Sherwood Anderson style do not show Bahr at his best. They are too much like the innumerable imitations that crowd the slick magazines. Bahr's talent comes through sharply and simply when his people are playing baseball, drinking, talking, expressing themselves in some kind of action. Though his narrative skill is not sustained, he holds on long enough to create some very enjoyable characters—Boozebelly, Baumzimmer, Mrs. Sobanski, Ole Peterson, Adolph the Wooden Fox, and Rosie. Perhaps the fact that few of the relationships selected for the basis of his stories have broad significance accounts for the thin patches. But Bahr is young and will grow and give us solid books.

MILTON MELTZER.

Brief Review

NO PASARAN. *By Upton Sinclair. Published by the Author.* 25c.

This ninety-six-page novelette should be distributed with the same fervor that filled the author when he wrote it. It should especially be distributed to those who say they don't know what all the shooting's for in Spain. It is a rapidly moving tale, perhaps a little naïve here and there, about six American boys who go to fight for the Loyalists—why they go, what they do, what they learn. The events, situations, and thought processes are all true and are described with vigor. Get behind it! The author sells ten copies for $1.75, a hundred copies for $15. His address is Station A, Pasadena, Cal.

R. F.

★

Recently Recommended Books

In the American Jungle, by Waldo Frank. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.
The New Soviet Constitution, by Anna Louise Strong. $1.50.
Bonaparte, by Eugene Tarlé. Knight. $4.50.
The Tragic Fallacy: A Study of America's War Policies, by Mauritz A. Hallgren. Knopf. $4.
The Cock's Funeral, by Ben Field, with an introduction by Erskine Caldwell. International. $1.25.
Mortgage Your Heart, by Sophus Keith Winther. Macmillan. $2.50.
Mathematics for the Million, by Lancelot Hogben. Illustrations by J. F. Horrabin. Norton. $3.75.
Peace Is Where the Tempests Blow, by Valentine Kataev. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.
The Private Manufacture of Armaments, Vol. I, by Philip Noel-Baker. Oxford. $3.75.
Rainbow Fish, by Ralph Bates. Dutton. $2.
Look Through the Bars, by Ernst Toller. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.75.
Low Company, by Daniel Fuchs. Vanguard. $2.50.
Spain in Arms, 1937, by Anna Louise Strong. Holt $1; paper 25c.
Bread and Wine, by Ignazio Silone. Harper. $2.50.
Away from It All, by Cedric Belfrage. Simon & Schuster. $3.
The Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Center: A Verbatim Report, published by the People's Commissariat of Justice of the U.S.S.R. Bookniga. $1.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Synthetic coronation movies—The question of music for the masses—New art shows

WITH their *Prince and the Pauper,* Warner Bros. demonstrate their astute sense of what is called showmanship. Although it has a superficial relationship to Mark Twain's satirical novel, this film is essentially about the coronation. This should be very distressing to the British film industry and the newsreels, which have made elaborate plans and have gone to great expense to "shoot" the ritual. And no doubt this should make England's most nationally minded film critic, Caroline Lejune (of the London *Observer*) weep once more, as she did at *Cavalcade,* that Hollywood makes better British films than the home boys.

This film is the story about a mistaken identity. The pauper manages to take the place of the young prince (Henry the Eighth's son), and there are adventures and court intrigue. Errol Flynn does some hard riding against a projected background and some fancy fencing. But the big thing about the film is the coronation sequence. And believe me, the brothers Warner put everything they had into the sequence. It is actually a preview of the coming coronation. If you had any doubts about T. A. Jackson's assertion in last week's NEW MASSES that "to a large extent the U.S.A. is to blame for the forthcoming coronation ballyhoo," this film can convince you.

Internes Can't Take Money (Paramount): A muggy saccharine film about hospital life, internes, gangsters, and a lost child. The writers have taken a cue from *The Eternal Mask* and some situations from *Men in White,* and filled in with most of the other hospital-film clichés. Barbara Stanwyck, as usual, hasn't much to offer in the way of acting, but oh how she can turn on those tears and pull a fainting spell!

Night Must Fall (M.G.M.): Another film about a psychopathic murderer. Not quite as repulsive as *Love from a Stranger,* but in the same class. Most of the critics, in greeting this film, have "found" Robert Montgomery as an actor who is capable of playing dramatic parts. Evidently they have forgotten his swell performance in *The Big House.*

Café Metropole (20th Century-Fox): What might have been a satiric film about rich American girls marrying fortune-hunting title holders turns out to be a very mild, romantic comedy about a young man who is framed into parading as a prince in order to catch a real American heiress. Even this might have resulted in slight satire hadn't the scenarists allowed the girl to know that the prince was really a Princeton lad and the Princeton lad really a right match for the girl since he comes from a wealthy family.

Shall We Dance? (R.K.O.-Radio): Another musical film for Fred Astaire's dancing feet. This new picture doesn't give Ginger Rogers the break she deserves, and suffers from a poor Gershwin score and flabby Gershwin lyrics.

Call to Arms (Amkino): An important theme: the defense of the Soviet Union against Nazi invasion. The film suffers from an artificial story and poor production. The actors as usual are of high caliber. Both *We Are from Kronstadt* and *Frontier* established high standards (on the same theme) that will be difficult to beat or even match.

Dr. Knock (French Motion Picture Corp. —at Cinema de Paris, N. Y.): An amusing celluloid version of Jules Romains's play about commercialized medicine—expertly played and capably directed by Louis Jouvet, who was the Spanish priest in *La Kermesse Héroique* (*Carnival in Flanders*).

Another piece of evidence that Pathé News is by far the most reactionary newsreel in the business is in their version of the May Day parade. There are short views of the marchers. The commentator says: "Not allegiance to America," and we are shown the reviewing stand. At this point the editor cuts in the original soundtrack (breaking in on the end of a slogan) which says ". . . and to defend the Soviet Union." Something should be done about Pathé.

PETER ELLIS.

CONCERT MUSIC

NATIONAL MUSIC WEEK . . . Mother's Day . . . and (according to a store window I glimpsed before I was able to avert my eyes) Baby Week. It's all too much for me. The gargantuan programs of the Federal Music Project's Festival of American Music, the Westminster, Rochester, Cincinnati, *et al,* festivals, are fatiguing merely to read, gagging whatever appetite for music is left at the tag end of the concert season. It isn't impossible (although it's usually difficult) to pick out items of interest or some laudable purposes in such festivals, but in actual operation they demonstrate no consideration for the listener, turn out to be the glorified shop talk of professional, semi-pro, and amateur music makers on a garrulous binge. An imposing list of first performances and novelties is written up for historians and program annotators to chew over for years to come, the limitless vanity of composers and performers is partly appeased; what matter that the individual listener emerges with a splitting headache as the net contribution to his musical consciousness?

Theodore Scheel

The other activities of the silly season, the "popular" opera presentations at the Hippodrome and the Metropolitan, the Goldman and other band concerts, the Stadium and similar summer symphonic series that are or soon will be upon us, are vastly more significant in that they do make a definite impact —for better or worse—on thousands of ears and minds. If their success and the consequent ability of the man in the street to whistle "La donna è mobile," "Celeste Aida," and the juiciest tunes of the "Unfinished" Symphony and *Tannhäuser* Overture is the test of a musical nation, we are rapidly approaching that goal. The impresarios are shoveling in the dollars and the doctors of music appreciation are rubbing their pudgy palms. No one seems to be taking thought of what the end will be. I suggest a look at those "most musical nations," Italy and Germany. Even before fascist control aborted every attempt of the creative urge to function, they were close to complete sterility in the tonal arts. And that soil is the breeding ground of more than æsthetic vermin carriers. Once your arts, like your politics, are split into watertight compartments of sterile academicism and popular narcoticism, you have straight thinking and honest feeling effectively stupefied. The next step is inevitable, and it, as well, can happen here.

But to stick to music, I am more than ever convinced that concerts as we have them here and today are giving rise to a tiny group of esoteric æsthetes on the one hand and on the other to a vast limp crowd vibrating only to tonal demagoggerel such as is fashioned consciously by a Respighi or twisted to shape as the demagogue conductors have twisted Beethoven and Wagner and many another. Victoria and Buxtehude and Bach didn't write for an anæmic intelligentsia, but willy-nilly one must become part of such a coterie to hear their works today. And with the change in audience comes a change in approach: preciousness and emasculation. This is a highbrow concert; it expects you to be and treats you like a dilettante. If you don't like that, you have your choice of the lowbrow concert where you are treated like a simpleton.

A new mass approach is obviously called for, but so far the most nearly successful experiments are those most dependent on extra-musical factors, particularly those in which music is subordinated in works conceived primarily for the stage, the films, or the dance. Development of the mass appeal of pure music has been almost negligible, yet I for one re-

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fuse to abandon hope that it will arrive.

One way, mass participation, or rather music-making in many small groups, has its pioneer workers, but it is quixotic to hope for too much until we have more and better conductors and musical organizers than we have now or are likely to have for a long time. More tangible and promising results have already been achieved in two other media, radio and recording. Unlike a play, film, or ballet, which necessarily has to trade on the lowest common denominator in a mass of psychologies, the broadcast and disk make their impact on a social group that is not only larger, but one representing the sum total of myriad individual minds.

This ideal and potentially almost unlimited audience is scarcely tapped as yet. The public for a film like *The Wave* or even *Fury* is small beside the millions mesmerized by the baby stares of Shirley Temple and Robert Taylor, but large in comparison to that commanded by the admirable broadcasts of a station like WQXR (reaching only a tiny percentage of listeners in the New York district) or even that dialing the catholic programs of Wallenstein, Barlow, Black, and the C.B.S. American School of the Air. And the circulation of disks like Musicraft's Buxtehude Cantatas and Victor's Ricercare from Bach's *Musikalisches Opfer* is still measured in the dozens or hundreds where Toscanini's Wagnerian vehemences are sold by the thousands. But these steps are as surely in the right direction as the music festivals are heading up a blind alley and the popular concert and opera seasons into a morass.

Those of us who have been hearing these broadcasts and disks (the superb Buxtehude cantata, *Singet dem Herrn,* has been flooding my mind most recently) haven't had to filter out tonal joys from countless diverting annoyances in a stuffy concert hall or a stuffier church. We haven't had to align with either a snobbish or a bovine audience. We have listened alone or in friendly groups, but we have known that we were not alone or a scant few: we have identified ourselves not only with our contemporaries who are seeking the same magical experiences, but with a great tradition of the tonal giants and everyone whose blood has ever quickened to their music.

R. D. DARRELL.

THE FINE ARTS

THE TEN (who are really nine painters) have come to Georgette Passedoit's Gallery in New York, each with a single example of his work. It is a pleasure to look at nine canvasses instead of ninety and, in each one, to sense a distinct personality. The Ten are American expressionists, who draw their inspiration, for the most part, from mid-European tradition. These young men bear watching, for without sacrificing the artist's point of view, their orientation is toward social painting. They are occupied with formal problems of design. In handling social themes, they seek to organize their material and to give it beauty of texture. Thus they are quick-

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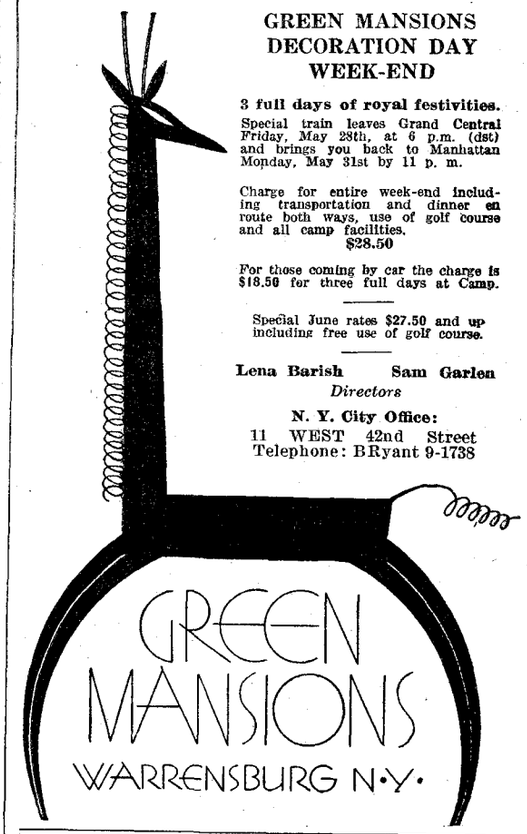

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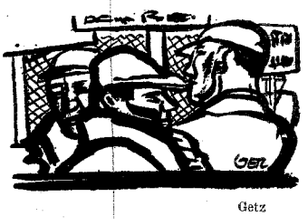
The range of The Ten is wide; it includes forms of expressionism evolving out of the romantic painting to expressionism, which merges with abstract surrealism. Bolotowsky's abstraction in acid green, black, and vermilion is closer to Miro than to the European expressionists; while Adolph Gottlieb in *Surf-Casting* uses a spare realism, concentrated on the essential movement of surf and the casting lines.

Lee Gatch, the newest member of the group, has a long, narrow panel called *Pennsylvania Barn* that in color and design recalls some of the patterns of the "levant style" paintings in the exhibition of prehistoric artists at the Museum of Modern Art. Kufeld presents *Subway,* a canvas that is as Gothic as Delaunay. And Ben-Zion has imbued that ancient theme of the bowl of fruit on the table with resonant color and movement in Byzantine harmonies close to Roault.

The human element predominates in Lewis Harris's dramatically lighted group, *Discussion,* where both color and attitude of the figure suggest that something of grave import is being discussed. Rothkowitz's *Family Trinity,* broadly composed, is focused on the rich interplay of broken color. *Gas Station* by Joseph Solmon again reveals this painter's sensitive handling of pattern, which, to my mind, is even more apparent in his painting at the present show of the American Artists' Congress. Similar to his large canvas in the same show, Louis Schanker displays one of his joyous musicians. But his exuberant color and frolicsome linear pattern is less moving to me than the darker, richer texture of *Striker and Policeman* which he showed last year at the American Artists' School.

It is interesting to compare these young Expressionists of the thirties with the work of Marsden Hartley now shown at an American place in New York. A native of Maine, Hartley began in the romantic tradition of Ryder, but through the years he has hewed out his own native New England form of expressionism, in which his original lyric impulse has been crystallized into bone-like precise patterns. Again and again, he takes the same theme, using it like a musical motif—the pastures of the "country of the pointed firs," the rhythm of north Atlantic surf on wild granite rocks, the lonely village kirk on the hill against the vast sky. To each of these themes, he gives a universal implication, while preserving their unique and regional flavor. Here is a native and even regional expressionism moving parallel to American *genre,* but without its literalness and also without its human interest. Akin to Marin, Hartley is a poet of the soil, and no human being has been allowed to in-



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trude into his lonely cosmos or to break his communion with elemental nature.

At Nierendorf's Gallery, also in New York, one may compare Hartley with another lyric master of sky and sea, the creator of a world in which there are many mansions but also few people. This world belongs to Lyonel Feininger, an artist born in New York, who was fated to become the "German cubist" par excellence. Taken to Germany at the age of sixteen, Feininger came under the influence of the French school. In the immediate post-war period, he translated the discoveries of Picasso and Braque into his own peculiar idiom and became one of the leading German expressionists. His later painting shows the strong impress of Paul Klee. With a few scratches on paper, he can conjure enormous vistas of sea and sail. Always his work has the soaring architectonic quality of our New York skyline; the edges of his intersecting planes are as sharply defined as if cut in jade and lapis-lazuli and yet as transparent as glass. An artist of single integrity, he uses pigment cleanly to register the most subtle color transitions. Next fall Feininger is coming to the United States to settle. It will be absorbing to watch the effect of our clear sky and straight buildings on his work, which even in Germany has preserved the geometric precision of our industrial cities.

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★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Daylight, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. Wed., May 19, 7:15 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Medicine. Prof. Henry E. Siegerist, Johns Hopkins University, on "Old and New Thoughts about Growth," Wed., May 19, 4 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

The World Today. Frontier Films' first news-feature release, and exciting!

The Last Night. A vivid Soviet film of the night of Oct. 6, 1917.

A Family Affair. A warm and human rendering of the small-town-middle-class-family story, with Mickey Rooney.

The Wave (Filmarte, N. Y.). Pioneer Mexican film with distinguished photography by Paul Strand. Working-class theme handled deftly.

Quality Street. A polite and charming filming of James Barrie's whimsical play. Katharine Hepburn and Franchot Tone in the leading roles.

Maytime. Just in case you like this sort of thing. It features Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, and a potpourri of music.

PLAYS

Professor Mamlock (Daly, N. Y.). Family of German-Jewish physician is caught in maelstrom of Nazi regime. A fascinating study of the psychology of changing human nature.

Babes in Arms (Schubert, N. Y.). Pleasant and talented cast of youngsters in amusing, tuneful Rodgers and Hart musical.

Excursion (Vanderbilt, N.Y.). Thunder on the left in comic vein by Victor Wolfson.

Miss Quis (Henry Miller, N.Y.). Small-town social satire by Ward Morehouse, with Peggy Wood and James Rennie.

Power (Ritz, N.Y.). The Living Newspaper's powerful and amusing attack on the utilities racket.

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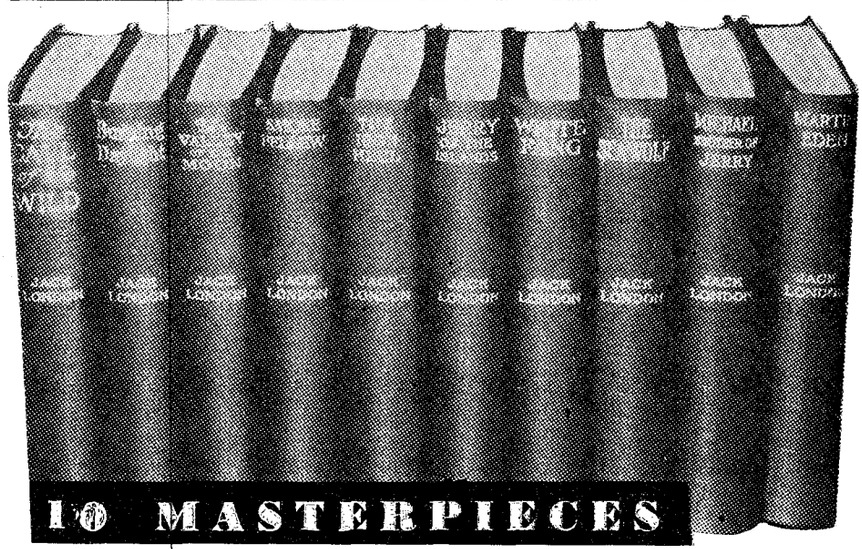

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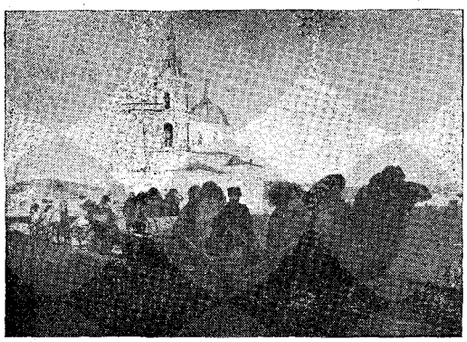

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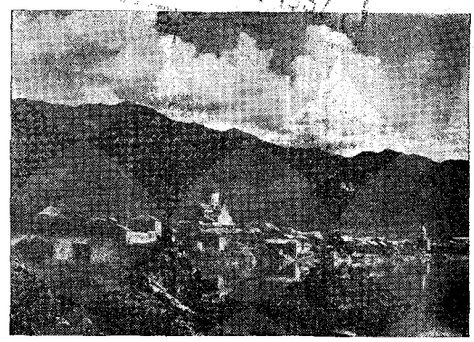

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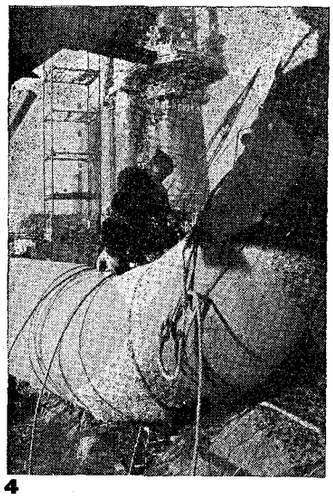

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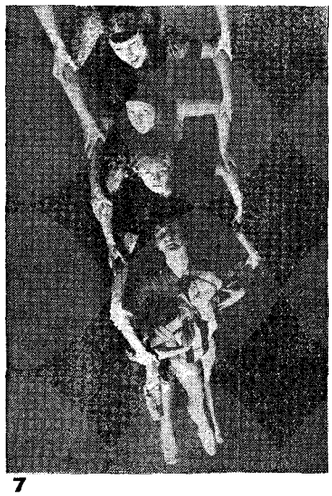

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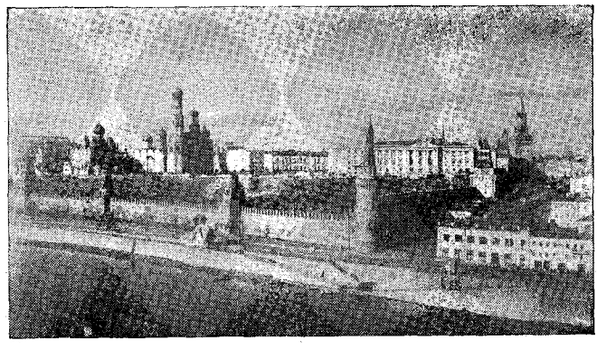

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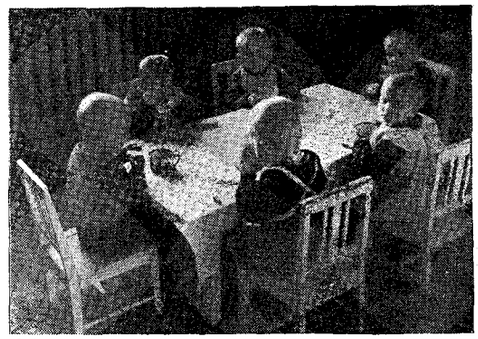

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